



# REVENUE AND RENT MOVEMENTS IN UNITED PROVINCES (1858~1900 A.D.)

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR THE  
**M. Phil. Degree**

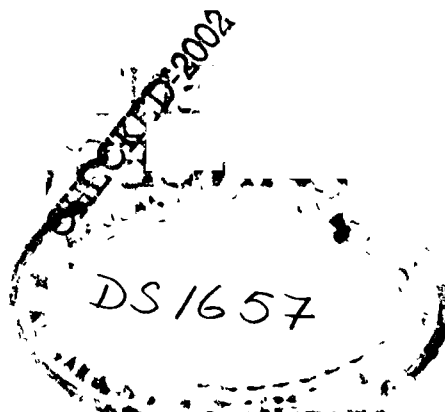
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This is to certify that the M.Phil  
Dissertation, entitled "Revenue And Rent  
Movements In United Provinces (1858-1900 A.D.)  
<sup>and</sup>  
~~is~~ prepared under my supervision by Mr.  
Mohammad Afaq Basheer Siddiqui, is an original  
piece of research. It is fit for submitting  
for the award of M.Phil degree.

  
( M.P. Singh )  
SUPERVISOR

## C O N T E N T S

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Map of the United Provinces, 1858-1900.

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P R E F A C E

This dissertation proposes to study the, 'Revenue and Rent Movements in the United Provinces (1858 to 1900 A.D.)'. In other words it seeks to analyse the effects of post-mutiny revenue policies i.e. 1858 being the year when these were introduced and 1900 being the year by which the effects had become manifested and known.

The rate of revenue assessment, at the time of mutiny broke out, was around 50% of the rental fixed in 1855 under the Saharanpur Rule. Later by the beginning of the 20th century it was reduced marginally by 5% and the rate then being 45%. The actual collection was obviously much higher as a result of cesses being charged.

It has been analysed in the present study that throughout the period the government's realization shows an upward trend in the entire United Provinces. However, the realization in Oudh and in the Gangetic Valley was much larger than in the permanently settled Banaras region and in the hilly tracts of Bundelkhand and Kumaun region. In these regions with the notable exception of Banaras region perhaps the government's desire to enhance revenue was constrained by the relatively lesser competition for land,

lesser penetration by the railways and lesser development of agricultural infrastructure like the canals and other irrigation facilities.

It is not the purpose of this study to disagree with the nationalists of the eminence of R.C. Dutt, Tara Chand and others, but one does need to place the undisputable fact of the enhancement of revenues in the context of the evidence of extension of cultivation, improvement in irrigation, rise in prices, shifting in the agricultural production from food crops to cash crops and so on. These developments obviously do not occur in the whole of India, nor even in the whole of United Provinces. But these are major reasons for the increase in the revenue realization in many important regions of the United Provinces. One even notices, in some specific regions e.g. Bulandshahr, Kanpur, Farrukhabad and even North-Western Provinces as a whole between 1840 and 1870, that the rent rise was lagging behind the rise in prices. The role of all these factors in determining the rent and revenue movements in the post-mutiny period has been taken into account in the present study.

An effort has also been made to look at the role of customs, caste, kinship ties and other such local forces in determining the rental collection. Perhaps the enhancement of government's collection had also something to do

with the success with which it modified these forces to suit its end.

The last chapter analyses the effects of the revenue movements. It has been found that the peasantry including obviously the landless labourers, sub-tenants etc. continued to suffer heavy oppressional exploitation all through our period, living as always on the verge of subsistence. The major beneficiaries were the zamindars, talugdars, moneylenders and their hangers on; and to some extent even the rich peasantry. The period thus saw the gradual development of the zamindar class as the most uncompromising loyalists of the British Raj.

I feel obliged to record my thanks to the persons who helped me during the course of this dissertation. First of all I would like to express my profound sense of gratitude to my supervisor Dr. M.P. Singh whose inspiring guidance and untiring encouragement helped me to complete this task. His affectionate attitude, genuine concern and Scholarly discourses always kept me lively to accomplish this work. I consider to express my feelings and regards for him in words will be extremely formal.

My thanks are also due to Mr. Zahoor Ali Khan and Mr. Faiz Habib who prepared the map with great exactitude.



I am also indebted to the staff members of the Research Library for their sincere cooperation.

It would be unfair if I fail to thank my colleagues and friends who extended their cooperation whenever I needed; especially <sup>of</sup> Mr Farhat Hasan, Mr. Javed Hasan, Mr. Jawaid Akhtar, Mr. Shamim Ahmad Khan, Mr. S. Ali Nadeem Rezavi, Mr. Najaf Haider, Miss Sumbul Haleem, Mr. Farid Ahmad, Mr. Hasan Imam, Miss Fatima Ahmad Imam, Miss Seema Singh and Mr. Sanjey Yadav.

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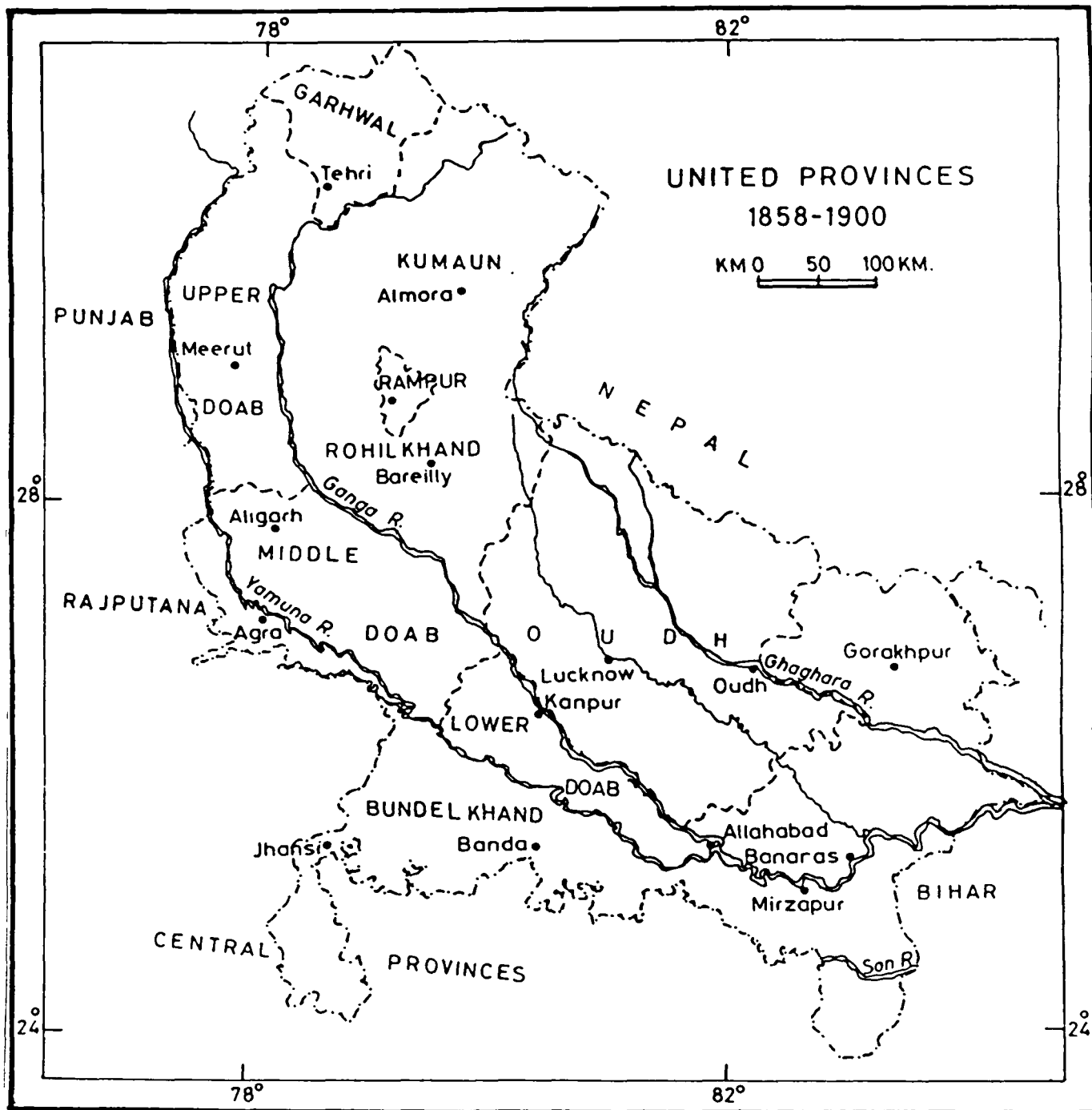
It would have been a bit difficult to carry out this piece of research without the financial grants which University Grants Commission has generously provided me.

My sincere thanks are to Mr. Zahoor Ahmad Khan who took great pain to type my manuscripts speedily and accurately.

CHAPTER - I

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

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## GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

The United Provinces consisting broadly of (present U.P.) was one of the important region of India which lies in the Central Ganges Valley. As the most populous and one of the richest in agricultural potential, it provides an area for the study of Colonial System with all its dynamics during the latter half of the nineteenth century. During the nineteenth century United Provinces (U.P.) composed two provinces, Agra or North-Western Provinces, as it was known from 1835 to 1902, and the twelve central districts of Oudh. The two came under British rule in 1801-1803 and 1856 respectively.

The area of the United Provinces lie between 23° 52' and 31° 18' north, and 77° 3' and 84° 39' east.<sup>1</sup> The United Provinces are bound on north by Tibet and on the north-east by Nepal; on the east and south-east by the Champaran, Saran, Shahabad and Palamau districts of Bihar.<sup>2</sup> On the south by two of Chota Nagpur States of

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1. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. xxiv; p. 132, for the geographical details of the region see also Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 1.

2. Ibid.

Central Provinces; on the west by the States of Gwalior,  
Dholpur and Bharatpur.<sup>1</sup> The Yamuna river forms part of  
the western boundary, the Ganges part of the southern  
and the Gandak part of the eastern; other boundaries<sup>2</sup>  
are artificial.

With a total area of 23,966 square miles the  
province of Oudh, lies between the latitudes of 25°35'  
and 29°06' north and longitudes of 79° 45' and 83° 11'  
east.<sup>3</sup> The river Ganges forms a natural boundary on  
south-western side from neighbouring governments. Nepal  
marches with it all along the north, with a frontier to  
the east, running along the foot of Siwaliks and  
advancing for some distance into the sub-Himalayan  
Terai.<sup>4</sup> To the east and the west it is enclosed by the  
districts of North-western Provinces with Jaunpur, Basti,  
and Azamgarh on one side, and Shahjahanpur, Farrukhabad<sup>5</sup>  
and Kanpur on the other side.

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Gazetteer of Oudh, Vol. I, p.1.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

The United Provinces include four distinct tracts, namely, portions of Himalayas, the sub-Himalayan tracts, the great Gangetic plane and portions of the hill systems of the Central India.<sup>1</sup>

The Himalayan tract on the extreme north comprise the districts of Almora, Garhwal, Dehradun and Nainital with the native states of Tarai.<sup>2</sup> These mountain regions include some of the most magnificent territory in the whole ranges of Himalayas, and the sacred rivers of Ganges and Yamuna take to their beginnings from the snow clad peaks of the mountain.<sup>3</sup>

The sub-montane range between Ganges and Sarda river has three distinct portions. Immediately below the hills lies a strip of land called Bhabar (porous).<sup>4</sup> Below the Bhabar is a wider strip of land called the Tarai, a dump and marshy tract covered for the most part with thick jungle and tall grass.<sup>5</sup> In both the Tarai and Bhabar the population is largely migratory cultivators.<sup>6</sup> On the northern side of Tarai the districts of plane almost having the same climate. In this region

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1. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. xxiv, pp. 132-33.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 2.
  5. Ibid. pp. 2-3.

the rainfall is heavy and streams are numerous.<sup>1</sup>

The Indo-Gangetic plane contributed more than half of the total area of the provinces. The western portions comprises thirteen districts: Muzaffar Nagar, Meerut, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, Mathura, Agra, Farrukhabad, Mainpuri, Etawah, Etah, Badaun, Moradabad and Shahjahan-<sup>2</sup>pur. Most of these are situated entirely in the doab region, but Mathura, Agra and Etawah also extended to the south and west of Yamuna, and the last three<sup>3</sup> districts lie north and east of the Ganges.

Except Mathura and Agra all these districts form a gently sloping plain of alluvial soil to which neither rock nor stone approaches the surface, though<sup>4</sup> beds of Kankar (nodular lime stone) are found. This portion of the province is by far the most prosperous. In the Centre of the Gangetic plain lie the districts of Kanpur, Fatehpur and Allahabad with nine of the Oudh districts, namely, Lucknow, Unao, Rae-Barellie, Sitapur,<sup>5</sup> Hardoi, Faizabad, Sultanpur, Pratapgarh and Barabanki.

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1. Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 2.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

The Oudh districts all lie between the Ganges and Ghagra while Kanpur, Fatehpur and part of Allahabad are in the Doab; Allahabad also extends north of the<sup>1</sup> Ganges and south of Yamuna.

The region of Oudh is generally fertile and closely cultivated. The eastern portions of the Gangetic plane includes Ballia, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Banaras and<sup>2</sup> Ghazipur; all lying between the Ghagra and Ganges. The rainfall is heavier than in the central and western<sup>3</sup> portions, and the population is denser.

The soil of the Oudh region is a rich alluvial deposit of light loam stiffening in some places into pure clay, and here and there deg<sup>e</sup>nerating into barren<sup>4</sup> sand. The unculturable land of Oudh is made up of the wide usar plains of south and west which are covered by<sup>5</sup> a thick saline efflorescence known as reh. This reh is fatal to any growth except some type of grasses. Nodules of carbonate of lime known as kankar are found in considerable deposits all over the province just below

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1. Ibid.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Gazetteer of Oudh, Vol. I, p. iii.
  5. Ibid.



the surface and afford an excellent material for hardening roads and the production of lime for building.<sup>1</sup>

On the south-west and south lie two small tracts which differ considerably from the main portions of the province. The four districts of Jalaun, Banda, Hamirpur and Jhansi with a total area of 10,400 square miles form the parts of Central Indian plateau, which are generally known as British Bundelkhand.<sup>2</sup> The soil is largely rocky and infertile with considerable patches of rich type of black soil, which differs entirely from all the alluvium<sup>3</sup> of the great plains. The sloping level is low and there is little canal irrigation. The region as a whole ranks<sup>4</sup> as the poorest and most backward portions of the province.

In the west, the area stretching from Bundel-Khand through Agra and Delhi, north along the Yamuna river, the landholding pattern was different. This area was prone to frequent famine and drought because of scanty and uncertain rainfall; the upper doab was marked by low

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1. Ibid.

2. Gazetteer of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 4.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

agricultural yields and a low population density.<sup>1</sup> Hence there was little opportunity for the growth of a class of Zamindars<sup>2</sup> supported by rental income. On account of infertility of the soil, there was no enough produce to sustain them. Thus out of necessity most of the village proprietor and cultivators shared out the lands equally among themselves in bhaichara<sup>3</sup> tenure.

The fertility of the soil is one of the important criteria in determining the rent rates, and also the degree of prosperity of the landholders and cultivators can be tested. The cropping pattern of the region can be determined on the basis of its soil distribution.

The soils of the province can be placed under three main categories. The valley soils of the Himalayas, the main alluvium,<sup>4</sup> and the Central Indian alluvium. Small patches of cultivation are to be found in the valley and on the hill side of the Himalayas where the ground is sufficiently plain.<sup>5</sup> The soils of this region are of local

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1. Eric Stokes, "Agrarian Society and the Pax Britannica in Northern India in the Early Nineteenth Century", Modern Asian Studies,<sup>9</sup> esp. pp. 515-27.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.
  4. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol.xxiv,p.176.
  5. Ibid.

origin and their composition varies with the varying<sup>1</sup> nature of rocks from which they have been formed. The second category of soil, that is main alluvium cover the greater portions of the province, stretching from the Himalaya on the north to the Yamuna river in the west and south. This type of soil has also been brought<sup>3</sup> down from the Himalayas. The soils of the Central Indian alluvium found principally in the Bundelkhand region and formed out mainly by the denundation of<sup>4</sup> Central Indian plateau.

The most characteristic is the 'black soil' (mar) with its light variant (Kabar); it contains<sup>5</sup> exceptional qualities of lime and sulphuric acid. The other kind of soil in the region are a light loam and a gravelly soil (rakar) which is ordinarily very<sup>6</sup> inferior. The classification of soils recognised by the agricultural community is sand (bhur or balua), loam<sup>7</sup> (dumat, doras or rausli); and clay (matiar). The first

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1. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. xxiv, p. 176.
  2. Ibid., p. 177.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Ibid.
  6. Ibid.
  7. Ibid.

kind of soil covers the large area of the province and is known as pilia or pilota, while the stiffest cultivable claye suitable only for inferior rice, known by various local names.<sup>1</sup> The heaviest clay known as U sar are almost infertile, can not be tilled by simple method. It is beyond the capacity of poor cultivators<sup>2</sup> to bring it into cultivation.

The whole province usually get the monsoon rains between June and September. The rainfall during this period varies with region, being greatest in the hills (50 to 60 inches); in the plains it decreases from east to west and also from north to south; thus the Gorakhpur and Banaras division receives 40 inches, while the Agra division receives on the average from 25-30 inches.<sup>2</sup> The weather changes rapidly only in October. The rainfall between October and February<sup>3</sup> averages from one to five inches in different years.

The system of cultivation depends on the quality of the soil and the amount of rainfall. Based on these two factors, Himalayan tract usually grow two harvests<sup>4</sup> in the year. In the Upper region the system of

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1. Ibid., p. 178.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid., pp. 178-79.

cultivation is varied than in the great plain.<sup>1</sup> In the Bundelkhand region very little irrigation facilities were available, hence it was not usual to take two crops<sup>2</sup> in the year.

As a whole large portions of provinces are highly cultivable, and there was a significant area of cultivable land which could be brought under cultivation.<sup>3</sup> In the year 1888 the cultivation in Agra Division declined enormously owing to water logging caused by a cycle of years of heavy rainfall.<sup>4</sup> But in the subsequent years condition was improved. Frequently the region of Bundelkhand felt severe drought and famine sometime owing to natural calamities and sometime man made.<sup>5</sup> In the rest of the provinces the area under cultivation is not liable to such violent fluctuations, but in any seasons it<sup>6</sup> varies with the rainfall.

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1. Ibid.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid., pp. 183-84.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Ibid.
  6. Ibid.

CHAPTER - II

LAND REVENUE PRIOR TO REVOLT

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## LAND REVENUE PRIOR TO REVOLT

After consolidation of British power in the North-western Provinces, the scenario of land settlement was gradually allowed for a reversal. The former revenue contractors were set aside in favour of both small and large landlords. Time and again it was insisted upon that the proprietary right should be conferred on a single owner. The greatest beneficiary was the village headman (mugaddams). In Bareilly district under the five year settlement, which was ending in 1817-18, mugaddami farmers<sup>1</sup> were engaged for as much 20% of the land revenue. Mugaddami was at best the first among equals in a community<sup>2</sup> of Cosharers. In the whole province the revenue assessment was based on the exaggerated amount of resources, available to government and the government demands were enhanced at certain intervals which proved fatal to the peasantry and also to the Zamindars.

The general trend of upward growth in revenue demand was an important feature of the periodical revisions.

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1. L. Brennap, "Social change in Rohilkhand 1801-33 the Formation of Zamindars class", IESHR, 7, 1970, pp. 45-47.
  2. Aasia Siddiqui, Agrarian Change in Northern India, pp. 26-31.

In Aligarh district the revenue demand was fixed at Rs. 19,29,978 in 1804-5 which rose to Rs. 33,14,022 by 1814-16, or 71% in the first twelve years of British rule, and a further enhancement of 25% took place in the subsequent period upto 1833.<sup>1</sup> Land revenue demand for ceded and conquered provinces enhanced from Rs. 1,88,12,617 in 1803-1804 to Rs. 2,97,30,977 in 1817-18, or 58% during fourteen year.<sup>2</sup> The cause of these severe assessment, as claimed by the British government was owing to the ignorance of the new British Collectors. Though it might have been one of the factors, but the important one was to maximise the revenue to such an extent which would permit to the conclusion of a permanent settlement on Bengal pattern.<sup>3</sup>

The magnitude of over-assessment can be well perceived by the fact that the assessed jama could not possibly be realised in full. When the extensive remissions could not yield the desired result, the government soon turned to the forced sale of land to recover the arrears.

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1 Aligarh Settlement Report, p. 54.

2 Holt Mackenzie Minute of 1 July 1819, Selection from the Revenue Records of N.W.P. 1818-20, pp. 156-57. Cf. T.R. Metcalf, Land, Landlords and the British Raj.

3 The plan for permanent Settlement was ultimately quashed by the Home government, reluctant to loose the future revenue such a course would entail in a country still relatively under developed. For further detail, see Imtiyaz Husain, Land Revenue Policy, Chapter II.



When all these experiments deceived their expectations, the government came out with the regulation VII of 1822, and made it the basis of revenue assessment but again failed to redress the problems of overassessment. For instance in Aligarh district four parganas were settled, but a decade later out of 37 villages, 35 sought reductions to an extent of Rs. 6,400 out of 47,533 rupees the total assessed <sup>1</sup>jamma.

Post 1828, the agrarian depression aggravated the situation further. Sudden collapse in the Indigo market and a decline in the raw cotton export from Northern India, created the shortage of currency and <sup>2</sup>consequently fall in prices.

The Agrarian depression found most of the cultivators to produce cash crops for market, which resulted in the decline of foodgrains production. But the profit of cash crops was not gathered by the cultivators. The general fall in prices substantially increased the burden of landholders who were supposed to pay a

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1. Hut Chinson, Aligarh Statistics, pp. 41-42.
  2. T.R. Metcalf, Land, Landlord and the British Raj, p. 60.

fixed amount of revenue demand in cash.<sup>1</sup> Aasia Siddiqui has calculated the increase in the real value of the jama owing to the fall in prices over the period 1822-33 at some 22%.<sup>2</sup> It resulted into the mounting up of arrears every where, total cultivation declined and the depression was so severe that the moneylenders and the other moneyed classes were reluctant to invest money in purchasing lands.<sup>3</sup> Initially the government pressed the collectors for the full realization of revenue demand, but at last, found it necessary over the course of decades 1823-33 to relinquish<sup>4</sup> the outstanding revenue balances amounting to Rs. 27,02,561.

It was found that regarding the Settlement made under regulation VII of 1822, different approaches had been adopted by different officers. In some districts the produce of the land was made the criteria of assessment while in other capabilities of land are alone looked for, therefore,<sup>5</sup> the soils being categorised and assessed accordingly.

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1 Ibid., p. 60.

2 Aasia Siddiqui, p. 173.

3 Metcalf, T.R.,

4 Imtiyaz Husain, Land Revenue Policy, p. 177. Over one third of the total sum remitted came from cotton producing Bundelkhand, the most severely depressed region in the province.

5. Letter from Governor General to the Sudder Board of Revenue on Deputation, 7 April 1831, Para 113 (Revenue Selection 1822-33, p. 263).

Whatever principles had been adopted for Settlement became less important when the concerned authorities took keen interest in promoting the cultivation of commercial crops. William Bentinck, the then Governor General after taken into account the conflicting point of views concluded that lands of equal fertility be equally taxed irrespective<sup>1</sup> of the crops produced.

In the majority of Settlements under regulation IX of 1833, the villages were classified according to the type and quality of the soil and it was then applied to the graded scale of rates which took into consideration various factors affecting local productivity such as facilities for irrigation and situation.<sup>2</sup> In certain cases the graded rates having no resemblance to the value<sup>3</sup> of the crop grown. But in others this was taken into<sup>4</sup> account, the richer crops being charged at a higher rates.

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1 Ibid.

2 Revenue Settlement, Vol. I, and II.

3 Report on the District of Meerut, 19 Dec. 1837, Para 24 (Revenue Settlement I, p. 222); A higher rate was not applied to sugarcane.

4 Reports on the District of Azamgarh, 16 Dec. 1837 (Revenue Settlement, I, pp. 42-43): The rates in the districts were unusually high because of the prevalence of Sugarcane, Indigo and opium cultivation.

Report on the District of Fatehpur, 30 Dec. 1840 (Revenue Settlement 2, p. 405): A higher rate was imposed on Tobacco and sugarcane lands, but with the exception of these two crops the rates were not determined by the kind of crops.

In certain other cases the rates were fixed and taken according to the kind of produce for which a particular soil has suited.<sup>1</sup>

The Regulation vii of 1822 belied the expectations of revenue officials. It resulted into a long drawn debate regarding the policy matters of revenue settlement in North-western Provinces. Holt Mackenzie and R.M. Bird were the followers of J.S. Mill, champion of utilitarian theory. Mill has already criticised the Bengal's zamindar class, naming them as parasite living at the cost of rent-paying cultivators.<sup>2</sup> In his point of view they had nothing to contribute in the development of agricultural sector. The protagonist of this idea advocated forcefully in, fixing raiyyat's rent.<sup>3</sup> But a pragmatic Bentinck was moved much more than a mere reform and put forwarded a policy in which he favoured the encouragement of capital enterprise in agricultural sector.<sup>4</sup>

All these arguments and counter-arguments came to an end with an enactment of Regulation IX of 1833, which was more or less the final views of William Bentinck.

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1. Report on the District of Saharanpur, 1 Feb. 1839, (Revenue Settlement, 1, p. 66).
  2. Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj. See also Aasia Siddiqui, Agrarian Changes
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid.

The responsibility of the Settlement was given to the Chief Settlement Officer, R.M. Bird, who did not challenge the basic principles of Regulation IX of 1833; but did not share Bentinck's concerns to sustain a substantial landholding class nor the latter's concern for the rights of talugdars. Bird turned the Settlement machinery instead to the purpose of an attack on privileged class. After 1835 most of the talugdars were dispossessed and their large estates were broken up. Even more harshly treated the lakhirajdar's or maufidars, the holders of revenue free grants. By 1840 the government have resumed over 16,95,301 acres of land assessed with a revenue demand<sup>1</sup> for Rs. 22,50,318.

Other details of district wise break-up to follow:

TABLE-1

Showing the land(in acres) with jamma figures (in Rupees) <sup>2</sup> after Resumption of the Revenue Free Land for the Year 1840.

<u>Division</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Land resumed</u>	<u>Jamma</u>
Meerut	Saharanpur	1,74,033	1,95,737
	Muzaffarnagar	45,948	53,126
	Meerut	40,858	54,263
	Bulandshahr	80,130	79,294
	<u>Aligarh</u>	<u>29,703</u>	<u>68,377</u>
T o t a l		3,70,672	4,50,797

1. Statement of Secretary, Board of Revenue of 15 May, 1840; Uttar Pradesh State Archives, B.R. Proceedings 15 May 1840, No. 3.

A further 3,69,000 acres were reclaimed after 1840. No detailed break-up of district wise is available for these later resumptions.

2. Ibid., Cf. T.R. Metcalf , Land Landlords and the British Raj, p. 71.

Rohilkhand	Bijnor	91,702	1,77,671
	Moradabad	43,614	41,640
	Badaun	82,561	81,700
	Pilibhit	8,267	11,107
	Barelley	32,218	43,291
	Shahjahanpur	22,897	24,531
T o t a l		2,81,241	3,79,940
Agra	Mathura	88,708	1,66,780
	Agra	90,278	1,63,628
	Farrukhabad	27,490	37,411
	Mainpuri	6,157	10,132
	Etawah	10,332	23,247
T o t a l		2,22,965	3,95,198
Allahabad	Kanpur	Collector's return not completed.	-
	Fatehpur	20,464	49,881
	Hamirpur	26,438	56,180
	Banda	17,468	20,288
	Allahabad	60,088	1,45,896
T o t a l		1,24,458	2,45,896

Banaras	Gorakhpur	2,63,643	1,70,542
	Azamgarh	1,07,215	1,61,939
	Jaunpur	21,333	62,686
	Mirzapur	72,200	54,150
	Banaras	28,457	28,000
	Ghazipur	2,03,117	2,93,117
		<hr/>	
T o t a l		6,95,965	7,70,434
		<hr/>	
Grand Total		16,95,301	22,50,318
		<hr/>	

The table above has to reveal that the most affected division after the resumption was Banaras and next was Meerut. And the district wise, Ghazipur was worst affected in which, 2,03,117 acres of land worth revenue of Rs. 2,93,117 was resumed by the government.

It is well known fact that R.M. Bird and his subordinate Officials were hostile towards the talugdari Settlement, whether it was owing to the idealised image of the village community or Recrdian principles for agrarian reform, or even only a desire to maximize the land revenue demand of the government. Moreover, even when the settlement was completed, it was noticed that the talugdars still remained a force to be reckoned with the rural scene.

The government granted a cash allowance or malikana to the talugdars as a compensation for the loss of their biswardari villages. In the initial Settlement the Raja of Mursan (Aligarh district) was paid from government treasury. The malikana share was 18% of the gross rental of each biswadari villages in the estate; (the villagers retained 20% and the government took 62%). By 1844 Rs. 3,04,759 had been granted as malikana to the <sup>1</sup>talugdars of the North-western Provinces.

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1. See the Table-2 on the next page.



TABLE - 2

Taluqdari Holdings Settled With Village Biswadar's.<sup>1</sup>

District	<u>Jamma</u> (in Rs.)	No. of villages	<u>Taluqdari</u> allowances (in Rs.)
Saharanpur	3,610	6	360
Muzaffar Nagar	955	1½	164
Moradabad	3,805	7	380
Barelley	7,001	80	1,260
Shahjahanpur	99,084	121	25,696
Aligarh	2,86,538	220	64,262
Mathura	26,341	54	7,853
Agra	34,616	41	10,920
Farukhabad	60,568	53	4,417
Mainpuri	1,59,278	265	46,810
Etawah	38,262	65	9,996
Kanpur	50,001	99	8,819
Allahabad	2,69,578	401	48,525
Gorakhpur <sup>a.</sup>	3,88,939	3,247	75,295
T o t a l	14,40,847	4,660	3,04,759

1. Enclosure to Secretary Board of Revenue to Secretary Government of North-Western Provinces, 25 October 1844; Board of Revenue Proceedings, 25 October, 1844, No. 65.

a. The Gorakhpur figures may be inflated by the inclusion of petty zamindars to whom payments were made on their exclusion from Settlements.

The actual picture of agricultural conditions can be drawn with the help of land revenue statistics available to us. For instance the actual revenue receipts of Agra Province shows that it rose from Rs. 4.96 crores in 1834-35 to 5.6 crores in 1844-45; i.e. an increase of about 13%.<sup>1</sup> According to another set of figures the land revenue of Agra Province amounted to f. 3.33m. in 1826-27 and f. 3.25m in 1831-32. In 1846-47 when the settlement was completed, the land revenue demand came to be f. 3.55m i.e. an increase approximately 8%<sup>2</sup> over the figures for 1826-27 and 1831-32.

The land revenue in North-Western Provinces assessed amounted to Rs. 4.6 crores for the year 1838-39 but the hasil (collection) for the same year was Rs. 3.6 crores. It means that only 78% of the total demand (jamma) was collected by the government official. In 1847-48 the jamma and hasil figures respectively were Rs. 4.3 crores and 4.2 crores and the realization amounted to 97%.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Parliamentary Papers, 1852 , Colonies: East India, 12 IUP, pp. 481-82.
  2. Parliamentary Papers, 1871 Colonies: East India, 19 IUP, p. 84.
  3. R.C. Dutt, Economic History of India in the Victorian Age, p. 46.

The figures have been converted at 1 pound = 10 rupees.

The above set of figures indicate that during nine years (i.e. 1838-39 to 1847-48) revenue demand declined around 6.52%, but at the same time revenue collection during the same period increased by 16%.

On paper, in the North-western Provinces, the land revenue was reduced from 91% to 83% of the total rental in 1822, to 75% by the regulation of 1833 and 66% by the directions of 1844. In 1855 for future Settlement<sup>1</sup> it was reduced to 50% by the so called Saharanpur rule.

In Northern India the assessment was not made permanently, but it was reduced to slightly over 50% including all cesses in 1855. But new cesses added; calculations were made on the perspective rental until the tax rose to close upon 60% on the rental. Now it is clear that the actual demand of government was about 60%<sup>2</sup> and not 50% as proclaimed by the Saharanpur rules.

The insistence of the settlement officer to work out the cost of production and vary the rates according to the soil, tends to suggest that the rental was assessed properly and the reductions of the land revenue to lower

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1. Eric Stokes, English Utilitarians and India, p.34.
  2. R.C. Dutt, The Economic History of India, Vol.I, p. x.
  3. Eric Stokes, English Utilitarians and India, p.34.

and lower proportions should have reduced the revenue demand per acre.<sup>1</sup>

It is best to understand that these measures for theoretically scaling down the land revenue were accompanied by others, that had the opposite effect. The land revenue under the preceeding Indian regims was fixed as a share of the crop and varied according to the crop cultivation.<sup>2</sup> The land revenue under the British whether directly imposed on the ryots or assessed on Zamindars,<sup>3</sup> was a true tax on land. The Anglo-Indian land tax had therefore, still less to do with actualities of production than the tax it was replacing. Secondly the more scientific land surveys increasingly made it impossible for any land to be concealed and so to escape assessment, a feature quite common under earlier administration. There was also large scale resumptions of lands, hitherto, held revenue free. Thus the actual incidence of demand per acre would 'increase simply because of more scientific and efficient survey, as well as owing to resumptions.

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1. Eric Stokes, English Utilitarians and India, p. 34.
  2. Irfan Habib, Colonialization of Indian Economy, Social Scientist No. 32, p. 31.
  3. Ibid., pp. 31-32.

Just after mutiny reconstruction of land revenue took place. The total collection of land revenue for the whole province was as follows:-

1858 - 59	Rs. 3,72,30,341
1870 - 71	Rs. 4,13,55,175
1871 - 72	Rs. 4,13,65,000

The above figures indicate that the collections of land revenue during 13 years (1858 -59 to 1871 - 72) was less than that of 1847 - 48. (the collection in 1847 - 48 was rupees 4.2 crores). The increase since 1858 - 59 was<sup>1</sup> due to the revision of settlement.

This gives the ratio of falls in the rate of incidence. This decline was owing to the several forces. On the one hand there has been great extension of cultivation and in those districts where the revision of settlement has not yet been completed, the revenue demand which was undisturbed, now falls on cultivated area at a higher rate than previously. On the other hand, where revenue revision has taken place the land revenue has been enhanced substantially. But the enhancement in land revenue was not of the same proportion as the extension of cultivation.

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1. Parliamentary Papers, Colonies; East India, 21 IUP. App. 15, p. 713.

At the last thirty years settlement made under Regulation IX of 1833, the government took as revenue 66% of the net assests of an estate. In 1865-66 i.e. during the time of revision of Settlement the demand has been limited to one half (50%).<sup>1</sup>

Now one can presume correctly that if the rent rates paid by the tenants to the land owner had remained unaltered, the revenue demand except so far it might be raised by the extension of cultivation, must have fallen to the level of one-fourth. But the rates of rent have not remained unchanged.<sup>2</sup>

The spread of irrigation, the improvements of communication especially railways and the late rise of prices of agricultural produce have combined to enhance them. Thus inspite of the lowering of the rate of assessment, the revenue demand has been increased in many districts in a larger proportion than the increase of cultivation.<sup>3</sup> The general picture, then was that from about 1820 to 1850, the total revenue collections increased substantially in all three major zones; the highest increase

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1. Parliamentary Papers. Colonies: East India, 21 IUP App. 15, p. 713.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

undoubtedly occurred in the North-western Provinces.  
(ceded and conquered provinces).<sup>1</sup>

The only factor which might relieve the pressure on agrarian economy could be a substantial increase in population, causing a dramatic extension of cultivation (only on the condition of availability of cultivable land), and, therefore, decline in the incidence of land revenue per acre as well as per capita.<sup>2</sup>

As usual the main source of income to Oudh rulers was from land revenue. The Nawabs claimed a share of agricultural produce from talugdars, community brotherhood and individual land-holders cum cultivators. Gradually with the passage of time community brotherhood and village land-holders declined and therefore could not cope with the encroachment of all powerful talugdars; ultimately they accepted the overlordship of the latter in order to secure the possession of land and privileges. In return for the protection by their talugdars they paid them rent and military services. Nawab Saadat Ali Khan's policy in Oudh was to cherish the peasantry and to keep

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1. Irfan Habib, The Colonization of Indian Economy, Social Scientist No. 32, pp. 33-34.
  2. Ibid.

in check the encroachment of the larger land-holders.<sup>1</sup>

But once the independence of village proprietors had been snatched away, their status and privileges were liable to decline stage by stage. Slowly but continuously the demand of the talugdars in the form of rent was raised, leaving only a small portion of the gross rental to the proprietors in addition to the seer<sup>2</sup> and sair<sup>3</sup> of the village.

In many other cases the talugdars assumed the right of direct management of an estate and on such occasions allowed the former proprietors to hold all or some of their seer land at favourable rates; or he would give them small money allowance instead or he would kicked them out altogether, without showing them any consideration whatsoever. But all these harsh treatment meted out to small proprietors seldom occurred, and the talugdars was not however, always able to impose his will.

The method of assessment and mode of collection both suffered by irregularities and injustice and it materially affected both the tenantry as well as proprietors.

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1. Irwin H.C., The Garden of India, p. 78. Cf. IESHO, 2, 1959, p. 93.
  2. Land held by landholders with special privileges. In assessment its value was usually reduced by something like one-fifth or one-fourth before revenue was fixed.
  3. Various form of income from landed property other than the produce of the cultivation, such as rent from fisheries from timber and fruit trees etc.



This injustice continued till the last days of the Kingdom of Oudh.

In directly administered lands the nazim ( the revenue farmer) invariably fixed the government demand. No written rules existed under which the gross rental was to be estimated. The usual method of assessment was for the nazim to call the ganungo to bring his list of estates showing the revenue paid for the previous ten or twenty years, and on that was fixed the demand for the year which mostly remained unchanged during his term of office.<sup>1</sup>

The land survey and crops yields were made the basis of land revenue settlement. By the mid nineteenth century accuracy was no longer maintained and at the same time revenue demand had been raised with the addition of abwabs or additional cesses. Initially leases were made for three to five years but after the death of Sa'adat Ali Khan in 1814, no leases were granted for more than one year and the revenue was fixed some 50% higher than that of previous times. This left the cultivators little<sup>2</sup> beyond a bare subsistence.

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1. JESHO, 2, 1959, p. 95. Quoted from Carnegie, P, Notes on the Land Tenure and Revenue Assessment, etc., p. 36.

2. Butler, D., Outlines of the Topography and Statistics of Southern Oudh etc., p. 92.

In most of the cases the land revenue demand fixed by the nazim was the maximum sum that an estate<sup>1</sup> could pay.

In Oudh under Nawab's rule, four system of revenue collection existed, which were tried at one time or another. These were khalisa, huzoor tahsil, ijarah and the amani.

The khalisa (crown lands) was directly held by the state and levy and collection of revenue was done by government officials. The khalisa land paid more in comparison to other system as there was no intermediary to draw its share over the gross collections. The revenue of the khalisa villages was collected easily at less expense. Small number of Nawabi official were employed for the task, because the revenue payers were merely the tenants at-will,<sup>2</sup> who could not resist even the over levy.

The huzoor tahsil system was more successful and popular in Oudh than any other mode of management. In that system the task of revenue collection was assigned to the head of the body of village proprietors. He gave security

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1. Carnegy, P., Notes on the Land Tenure and Revenue Assessment etc., p. 31.
  2. Jagdish Raj, 'The Revenue System of the Nawabs of Oudh', p. 96, JESHO, 2, 1959.

for the amount of revenue he had agreed to pay.<sup>1</sup> Under this system the chief zamindar deposited the assessed revenue directly to the treasury. Under huzoor tahsil gross oppression was rare and comparative happiness prevailed.<sup>2</sup> This system though beneficial for the people as well as the ruler, had a limited application in this province. In 1841 out of a total revenue of 1.25 lakh pound Sterling, the huzoor tahsil revenue was 90,000<sup>3</sup> point Sterling or Rs. 8,87,316. The collection for the year 1852-53 was Rs. 22,76,711. James Outram was of the opinion that the land under huzoor tahsil system could not have increased to such an extent, but expected that they were more likely to have declined under the weak<sup>4</sup> rule of later nawabs.

It has been noted that in the Sultanpur district where most of the villages had previously been held under<sup>5</sup> huzoor tahsil, none such existed in 1855.

The third revenue assessment system was the ijarah which was simply a system of contract between the rulers and his collectors. The advantage of this system

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1 Ibid., p. 97.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

to the ruler was that he received a fixed amount of revenue without much delay or trouble. And the benefit to the collectors who were not getting set salary, were left free to collect, from landholders as much revenue as they could over and above the state demand.<sup>1</sup>

The collectors were only interested in their own profit. They did not have any regard for the future prosperity of the ruler, nor for the welfare of the general people at large. The immediate object of the contractor was to squeeze as much money as possible from the area he had contracted for.<sup>2</sup>

Under Ghazi-ud-din Haider, while Colonel Baillie was the resident, the contract system was converted into amani all over Oudh. But after two years the system failed<sup>3</sup> and again the whole country was let out to Contractors.

Under the amani system the government directly appointed amils and other subordinate officials. They calculated the probable income of every estate and assessed the government demand at the rate varying from six annas to eight annas in the rupee.<sup>4</sup> In the month of January the

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1. G.D. Bhatnagar, Awadh Under Wajid Ali Shah, p. 168.
  2. Ibid., p. 169.
  3. Ibid., pp. 170-171.
  4. Ibid., p. 172. Quoted from Afzal-ut-Tawarikh by Ram Sahai Tamanna, p. 147.

amils realized the assessed revenue and deposited in the government treasury with all necessary papers called dols. The money that was paid to revenue officer by the Zamindar as nazr was never recorded, but the government allowed it<sup>1</sup> to be collected proportionately with the revenue.

The amani was the best mode of revenue assessment and collection, but it proved unsuccessful in Oudh for want of efficient control. The main cause of its failure was that the persons who worked in the amani system were found corrupt and dishonest. They looked to their own<sup>2</sup> interest rather than their sovereign. Apart from mismanagement, the amani system had several defects. For the concealment of corrupt practices regarding land revenue the amil lavishly bribed the court officials so as to deal<sup>3</sup> leniently with their accounts book.

Some times the soldiers were paid by assignment of revenue in certain areas (ilagas). This system was known as the Qazb. No doubt this mode of payment was injurious to the state but had to be adopted against turbulent peasantry. Rack-renting by the soldiers were

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1. C.D. Bhatnagar, p. 172.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 175.

common. Sometime to avoid any future trouble, a Zamindar of his own free will placed his own estate under a military officer or an influential person for the collection of rents and payments of the state revenue.<sup>1</sup> This system was called Jamog.<sup>2</sup> Then the Zamindar was paid an allowance from the revenue realized in recognition of his proprietary rights. This allowance was known as nankar.<sup>3</sup> During the reign of Wajid Ali Shah (1847-56), the last ruler of Oudh, the land revenue framework was the same as had been established by his predecessors and the land revenue continued to be the main source of the income of Oudh government.

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1. G.D. Bhatnagar, p. 175.
  2. A process sanctioned under native rule, by law or custom, by which the lessor of the village or estate, not having confidence in the lessee might sent his own servant to collect the rents; an account being kept of the same, the lesser being entitled to the profit or liable for the loss accordingly as the collections exceeded or fell short of the sum for which the village had been leased.
  3. Nankar - An allowance or deduction from the rent. of the land made to the person who engaged for the revenue in the nawabi. It was at once an acknowledgement of his proprietary right and an allowance to him for managing the village.

The estimated revenue of Oudh government in 1846 was Rs. 1,23,68,841 while in 1847 it increased to Rs. 1,44,73,383.<sup>1</sup> But Colonel Richmond, the Resident, remarked that the estimated amount was never collected in full,<sup>2</sup> and 14 lakhs to 20 lakhs always remained unrealized.

Captain Hayes provided an estimate that in 1853 and 1854 the revenue receipt was Rs. 1,21,66,214 and Rs. 1,22,03,082 respectively; of which only 40 lakhs for the 1853 and 36 lakhs for 1854 were actually deposited in the treasury.<sup>3</sup>

The revenue demand in the last year's of Wajid Ali Shah's rule was Rs. 1,38,03,731. After annexation in 1856 under British rule the land revenue amounted to Rs. 1,04,89,755. In 1858-59 a summary settlement was made in which land revenue was assessed at Rs. 1,04,20,990, besides Rs. 5,99,856 on resumed rent-free land. Thus under the summary settlement of 1858-59 there was a net decrease of Rs. 68,685 as compared to the 1856 settlement under British rule.<sup>4</sup>

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1. G.D. Bhatnagar, p. 177.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid. (The figures supplied by Hays to Outram were unauthentic and based on the information of an unknown person who claimed to have an access to the darbar accounts.)
  4. Chand, T.P., The Administration of Awadh, pp.116-17. Quoted from Foreign Department Political Consultation, Supplementary, 30 Dec. 1859, No. 502.

## CHAPTER - III

### MOVEMENT OF RENT AND REVENUE: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS.

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MOVEMENT OF RENT AND REVENUE :  
A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

One of the advantages in dealing with the colonial period of Indian History is the abundance of raw data. Unfortunately, despite this basic advantage scholars have until very recently, refrained from synthesizing of the available data to arrive at a better understanding of the socio-economic conditions of the colonial period. In this Chapter a quantitative analysis of the movements of rent and revenue during the period is being proposed. The raw data for this analysis has largely been provided by the British Parliamentary papers, Imperial Gazetteers; Gazetteers of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh; Oudh Gazetteers, different district Gazetteers of North-western Provinces and many Settlement Reports.

Much before the expiry of Settlements made under regulation IX of 1833, officials of the revenue board started to work out the procedure which was conducive in the revision of Settlements.

The tenurial catagories remained more or less the same, but a major development in procedure was introduced. The rules drawn up in 1855 for the Settlement of Saharanpur

district established a new principle which became a crux for future assessments.

Revenue officers ascertained rent rates for Valuation from the aggregate recorded rentals of every mahals. The rental as recorded in the account book for each mahal was to be compared with this decided rent rate which was adjusted if it proved to much in excess of the assests, recorded for the majority of mahals. The revised rate was<sup>1</sup> the basis on which the demand was fixed.

The rate of growth of land revenue in the North-western Provinces since the mutiny year has, however, been moderate. In the first fourteen years it was only 50% (3.5% per annum). But in the next 20 years it has risen to only 10% or 0.5% per annum. This growth rate was nominal; and attributed to the less possibility of extension<sup>2</sup> of cultivation.

After the revolt when the British Government regained their power and established themselves firmly, they somewhat changed their policy regarding the revenue

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1. W.H. Moreland, Revenue Administration of the United Provinces, pp. 42-43.
  2. Baden-Powell, Land Systems of British India, I, p. 380.

Settlement pattern, but the basic principles of land revenue assessment continued as earlier. Total collection of the land revenue for the whole North-western Provinces<sup>1</sup> is as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rs.</u>
1858 - 59	3, 72, 30, 341
1870 - 71	4, 13, 55, 175
1871 - 72	4, 13, 65, 000

These figures clearly indicate that the collection of land revenue during 13 years (1858-59 to 1870-72) was less than that of 1847-48 noted earlier. Many factors were responsible such as disturbances created by 1857 rebellion, famines, and also half-rental rule reduced the share of the government.

The land-revenue of the North-Western Provinces including permanently settled areas stood as Rs. 4,29,22,000<sup>2</sup> in 1882-83. The increase in the land revenue was possible due to the extension of cultivation, irrigation facilities improved, resulted into the improvement of agricultural produce.

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1. Parliamentary Papers, 1873, 21 IUP, Appdx. No. 15, p. 713.
  2. Baden Powell, Land System of British India, Vol.2, p. 72.

Land revenue movement can be very well seen with the help of district wise analysis. As far as Agra is concerned, the revenue was assessed at Rs. 16,29,344 in 1840, but after revision it was increased to Rs. 18,07,660 i.e. 11% rise over the previous assessment. During the 1840 Settlement, two third rule of rental assets was prevalent in Agra and if calculated the total rental assets of the district would come to Rs. 24,44,012. During the revision of Settlement of 1865-66 under Saharanpur Rule, the government demand was fixed at Rs. 18,07,760 meaning by that the total rental for Agra was calculated at Rs. 36,15,320<sup>1</sup>. For the same period patwari nikasi (jamabandi)<sup>2</sup> or rent rolls estimated the rent as Rs. 29, 57, 184. But then about 1/4th of the whole cultivated area was held by proprietors as sir which was assessed at low rate. Of the whole area 36% was cultivated by proprietors, 51% by occupancy tenants and 11% by tenants-at will.<sup>3</sup>

During the next revision of Settlement, which started in 1886-87, a substantial amount of enhancement was made in land revenue assessment. In Gorakhpur district

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1. Baden Powell, Land System of British India, Vol.2, p. 73.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.

an increase of 45%; in Basti 46%; in Bulandshahr 50%;  
while in Jhansi only .13%.<sup>1</sup> The total land revenue of the  
North-western Provinces was enhanced by about half a  
million since 1875.<sup>2</sup> Revenue officials attributed this  
rise owing to the agricultural expansion, irrigation  
facilities and commercialization of crops.

The situation in Meerut district was not very  
much different. The following table indicates the growth  
rate in the district concern.

TABLE - 3

Revenue Demand At Successive Settlements in Meerut District

<u>Year of Settlement</u>			
<u>1835</u>	<u>1866</u>	<u>1872</u>	<u>1901</u>
Rs. 18,25,181	21,80,401	21,73,499	29,25,720

In the Meerut District the demand for revenue and cess  
for the year 1901 A.D. was Rs. 32, 23, 616.<sup>4</sup>

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1. W. Crooke, North-Western Provinces of India, p. 307.
  2. Ibid.
  3. District Gazetteer of Meerut, Appdx. xiv; see also Atkinson Gazetteer, Vol. III, p. 281.
  4. Ibid., Appendix xvii.

With the help of table we can calculate that during 66 years' span (1835 to 1901), the increase in the revenue demand was 60%, meaning by 0.9% per annum, which is almost negligible but the actual result was very different. If we see another figures we find that during the same span agricultural production, irrigation facilities and expansion of land under cultivation could not increase in the same proportion, but at much lower rate.

Another set of statistical data, provided by the government records throw some valuable light on the distribution of produce. In the Meerut district during 1865-66, the total cultivated area was recorded as 10, 58, 275 acres yielding a produce valued at Rs. 1, 04, 41, 758 or 9-10-10<sup>1</sup> per cultivated acre. The cultivator's share in this gross produce was estimated at Rs. 64,64,416 or Rs. 6-1-8 per acre. The zamindar's share including the government amounted to Rs. 37,77,342 or Rs. 3-9-2<sup>2</sup> per cultivated acre. With these figures cultivator's share came out as 63% of the gross produce. Deducting the government demand or Rs. 19,50,239 Rs. 1-3-7

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1. Edwin T. Atkinson, Statistical Descriptive and Historical Accounts of the N.W.P. of India, Vol. III, pp. 302-303.
  2. Ibid.

per acre from Rs. 37,77, 342; zamindars share will come out Rs. 18,27,013. The share the government and zamindars thus amounted to 19% and 17% of the gross produce respectively.

If these figures are compared with the statistics obtained at the 1872 census, we find that the average holding each male adult agriculturist comes to 5.8 acres, for which he pays Rs. 3-7-10 per acre as rent to the landlord.<sup>1</sup> The revenue was at the rate of Rs. 2-1-3 per acre or including cesses incidence per acre was Rs. 2-4-5,<sup>2</sup> leaving the landlords profit as low as Re. 1-3-5 per acre.<sup>3</sup> The difference in the rate of incidence of government demand was attributed to the inclusion of revenue free cultivated land in the former return, and non completion of settlement during the period of 1865-66.

In 1872 the land revenue for Meerut district was assessed to Rs. 21, 84, 310 or Rs. 24,00,920 including cesses, while the amount paid by the cultivators in the same year was Rs. 37, 41, 286.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Atkinson, Vol. III, pp. 302-03.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

In the upper doab region Mathura district was assessed under regulation IX of 1833, which was completed in 1842, the government revenue demand was fixed Rs. 14,34,251<sup>1</sup>. At the expiry of Settlement in the cis Yamuna tract the rate of incidence per acre was Rs. 1-10-11 per cultivated acre; whereas in the trans-Yamuna tract the incidence fell at Rs. 2-8-3<sup>2</sup>. The following table presenting the good picture of revenue fluctuations in Mathura district at different intervals of Settlement.

TABLE - 4

Revenue Demand at Different Settlements<sup>3</sup>

Year	1842	1879	1906
Rs.	14,34,251	16,05,391	14,85,589

In 1906 including cesses the total government revenue demand was fixed as Rs. 16,45,786.

During the 1879 Settlement the rate of incidence per acre of cultivation was assessed Rs. 2-5-8; but the difference between the eastern and western tract was marked<sup>4</sup>. In trans Yamuna it was Rs. 2-12-8 per cultivated

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1. District Gazetteer of Mathura, p. 150.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid. Appde. xiii-xiv.
  4. Ibid., p. 155.



acre and in Cis-Yamuna it was Re. 1-14-0. The severely assessed area was Sahpan and Sadabad where incidence per acre fall at Rs. 3-5-0 and 3-1-11<sup>1</sup> respectively. These two rates were then the highest paid in any pargana in the distirct.

Now the movement of revenue in the Aligarh district can be seen with the following table:

TABLE - 5

Revenue Demand at Successive Settlements in Aligarh District<sup>2</sup>

<u>Years of Settlement</u>	<u>Amount (in Rs.)</u>
1834-40	18, 41, 242
1867-71	21, 47, 343
1879-1901	24, 69, 270

The revenue growth in the first thirty years was 16.6% and in the next 20 years 15%; indicating that the rate of growth was declining. In the overall 50 years the growth was 34%. The government attributed this growth in revenue demand to increase in cultivation, irrigation facilities<sup>3</sup> and population with the consequent rise in land rent.

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1. District Gazetteer of Mathura, p. 155.
  2. District Gazetteer of Aligarh, Appdx. xiv.
  3. Ibid., p. 135; see also Atkinson, Vol. II, pp. 426-27.

The incidence per acre of cultivation was Rs. 2-0-11 as compared with Rs. 2-3-1 in 1834-40.<sup>1</sup> After the completion of second revision of Settlement in 1901, the incidence was Re. 1.9 per acre, varying from Re. 1.6 to Rs. 3.4 in different tahsils.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE - 6

Total Receipt of Land Revenue in Aligarh District.<sup>3</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Land Revenue (Rs.)</u>
1880-01	21, 34,000
1890-91	20, 88,000
1900-01	21, 87,000
1903-04	24, 16,000

In Bulandshahar district revision of Settlement was started before Mutiny but completed in 1865, in which revenue demand was fixed 12.4 lakhs of rupees; showing an increase from the previous Settlement owing to the removal of earlier survey errors, and the earlier concealment of land at the time of Settlement and also in the improvement of rental value of land.<sup>4</sup> The next revision of Settlement was completed between 1886-89, and the demand was fixed Rs. 19.8 lakhs which later on increased to 20 lakhs of rupees.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Ibid.

2. Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, I,  
pp. 360-61.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

The incidence per acre was Re. 1-15-0, varying in different parts of the district from Re. 1-2-0 to Rs. 2-9-0.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE - 7

Collection of Land Revenue (in Thousands of Rupees) in Bulandshahar District. 2

<u>Year</u>	<u>Land Revenue(Rs.)</u>
1880-81	12,31
1890-91	18,40
1900-01	19,81
1903-04	19,85

Now we have another set of figures by which one can analyse the movement of revenue in Bulandshahar district at different Settlements.

TABLE - 8

Showing Movement of Revenue in Different Settlements

<u>Year</u>	<u>Land Revenue(Rs.)</u>	<u>Incidence per acre in Cultivated area.</u>
1948	10,74,587	1-9-5
1853	10,56,835	1-7-8
1859	11,32,728	1-10-1½
1865	12,74,926	1-10-1½
1871	13,66,203	1-12-½

1. Edwin T. Atkinson, Vol. iii, pp. 58-59.
2. Ibid.

TABLE - 9

Demand And Collection are Shown. (in Rupees)

Year	Demand	Collection	Balance	% of Balance on Demand
1860-61	11,10,174	9,61,076	1,49,098	13.43
1861-62	11,09,235	10,73,122	36,113	3.25
1871-72	13,66,047	13,56,616	9,431	0.19
1872-73	12,40,758	12,32,792	7,956	0.13

The growth of revenue demand was steady but slow and at the same time realization was impressive and improvement is obvious. In the district agricultural expansion was also noticed. During the span of 25 years (from 1846 to 1871) nearly one lakh acre of cultivated area has been increased and a considerable margin of culturable land<sup>1</sup> still remained waste. Obviously it would have helped the extension of cultivation in future.

The proportion of revenue and rent including cesses in Bulandshahr may be seen from the table below. The table is based on parganah wise agrarian statistics<sup>2</sup> for the year 1872.

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1. Ibid., p. 22.

2. Ibid., pp. 103-190.

TABLE - 10 (Figures in Rupees)

<u>Parganah</u>	Land Revenue	Land Revenue includ- ing cess.	Rent and cess paid by culti- vators to land owners.	Rate of incidence on culti- vated land.
Agauta	89,000	98,255	2,50,817	1-12-10
Ahar <sup>a</sup>	82,969	-	3,09,441	1- 3- 5
Anupshahr	83,997	92,403	1,92,814	1- 7- 1
Baran	1,08,465	1,10,704	2,96,156	1-11- 5
Dadri	1,27,763	1,40,679	2,93,458	1- 4- 6
Dankaur <sup>b</sup>	65,637	-	1,95,769	1- 0- 5
Dibai	1,26,557	1,39,414	3,22,424	1- 8- 0
Jewar	82,217	93,747	1,61,725	1- 5- 6
Khurja	1,35,555	1,49,136	3,34,076	1- 8- 9
Pahasu	84,300	92,732	2,00,389	1- 8- 6
Sayana	98,980	1,09,425	1,99,758	1- 7- 4
Shikarpur	57,021	62,955	1,59,123	1- 7- 4
Sikandrabad	96,560	1,07,353	2,72,094	1- 5- 2
	12,39,022	-	31,88,044	-

a, b. For the parganah of Ahar and Dankaur the amount of cess is not available.

In the Barelley district government revenue was fixed at Rs. 11 lakhs under Regulation IX of 1833, but after revision in 1867-70 it was enhanced to Rs. 13.5 lakhs; but later on in 1874-76 it was reduced by about Rs. 4,000 owing to the assessment of too large an area<sup>1</sup> in north of the district where cultivation fluctuates. Next revision was due in 1898-1902, and the revenue was assessed to Rs. 15 lakhs. At the same time government claimed that this demand was representing 50% of the net<sup>2</sup> assets. The incidence falls at the rate of 1.7 rupees per acre, varying from Rs. 1.3 to Rs. 2.0 in different parts of the district. Collection of the government revenue was maximum.

TABLE - 11

Collection of Land Revenue in Thousands of Rupees  
(Barelley District)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Land Revenue</u>
1880-81	13,14
1890-91	12,93
1900-01	15,44
1903-04	14,94

- 
1. Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 541.
  2. Ibid.

In Moradabad district during the revision between 1872-80, revenue demand was enhanced from rupees 12 lakhs to Rs. 14.6 lakhs. This enhancement amounted to 21.66%.<sup>1</sup> The incidence per acre was Rs. 1.3, varying from Re. 06 to Rs. 1.8 in different parts.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE - 12 (In Thousands of Rupees)

The Revenue Collection in Moradabad District was as follows.<sup>3</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Land Revenue</u>
1880-81	13,36
1890-91	13,88
1900-01	15,81
1903-04	14,61

During 1839-40 Bijnor district was settled and the land revenue was fixed at Rs. 11,48,488, giving an average incidence of Rs. 2-7-0 per acre of cultivation and the rate ranging from Rs. 3-8-4 in parganah Kiratpur to Rs. 1-8-0 in Bashta.<sup>4</sup> At the expiry of Settlement (i.e. end of June 1866) revenue assessment was enhanced to Rs. 11,83,585. This enhancement was possible due to the

- 
1. Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 541.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.

resumption of revenue free lands and by the assessment<sup>1</sup>  
of alluvial accretions.

At the completion of eleventh settlement in 1903,  
government demand was fixed at Rs. 14,65,341, representing<sup>2</sup>  
an enhancement of nearly 24% on the preceeding assessment.

Overall movement of revenue in the district can<sup>3</sup>  
be visualized by the following statistical table.

TABLE - 13

Revenue Demanded at Sucessive Settlements (in Rs.)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Land Revenue</u>
1802	9,14,931
1805	9,21,292
1808	9,70,464
1834-40	11,48,488
1866-73	11,83,029
1896-1903	14,66,341

Regarding Banaras district which was permanently  
settled, the following data highlights the situation of  
revenue assessment and collection in different years.

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1. District Gazetteer of Bijnor, p. 147.
  2. Ibid., p. 154
  3. Ibid. Appdx. xii.



TABLE - 14

Land Revenue Assessment And Collection.<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Demand(Rs.)</u>	<u>Collection (Rs.)</u>	<u>Balance(Rs.)</u>
1871-72	8, 94, 348	8, 93, 061	1,287
1872-73	8, 94, 348	8, 92, 415	1,933
1873-74	8, 94, 043	8, 92, 166	1,877
1874-75	8, 93, 947	8, 92, 389	1,558
1875-76	8, 93, 847	8, 92, 372	1,475
1876-77	8, 93, 765	8, 85, 276	8, 489
1877-78	8, 95, 680	8, 78, 497	17,183
1878-79	8, 96, 290	8, 94, 893	1,397
1879-80	8, 96, 151	8, 95, 583	648
1880-81	8, 96, 259	8, 95, 730	889

According to the official statement of 1881 government revenue demand including water advantage tax where it exist, was Rs. 8, 96, 258; or with local rates and cesses (excluding patwari cess) was Rs. 10,01,718. The amount of rent including local cesses paid by cultivators<sup>2</sup> was Rs. 16, 94, 997.

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1 Fisher and Hewett, Statistical Discriptive and Historical Account of the N.W.P. of India, Vol. 14, p. 80.

Another permanently settled district was Gorakhpur in which the movement of revenue can be analysed with the help of following available data.

TABLE - 15  
Land Revenue Assessment and Collection  
in Gorakhpur. 1

<u>Year</u>	<u>Demand(Rs.)</u>	<u>Collection (Rs.)</u>	<u>Balance(Rs)</u>
1868-69	11, 58, 184	11, 47, 318	10, 866
1869-70	11, 60, 908	11, 50, 563	10, 315
1870-71	11, 64, 680	11, 54, 406	10, 274
1871-72	11, 63, 628	11, 58, 140	5, 488
1872-73	11, 61, 497	11, 59, 990	1, 057
1873-74	16, 70, 063	16, 01, 863	68, 200
1874-75	16, 73, 974	16, 71, 632	2, 342
1875-76	16, 78, 007	16, 77, 829	178
1876-77	16, 80, 716	16, 79, 893	823
1877-78	16, 83, 460	18, 83, 370	90

During nine years (1868-69 to 1877-78) the enhancement in land revenue was 45% i.e. 5% per annum. Whereas in the Banaras district growth was almost negligible.

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1 E.T. Atkinson, Vol. 6, p. 396.

Oudh was annexed in 1856 and the summary Settlement was completed in 1858. This assessment was heavily pressed on the people because it was based on the fixed jamma of previous settlement.

The first regular settlement began in 1860. The principle of revenue assessment was similar to that of North-western Provinces, and embodied the Saharanpur rule of 1855. According to the assessing officers, patwari's rental records was unreliable. Ultimately they turned to the calculations of assumed rentals based largely on soils. Naturally this system left much scope for arbitrariness.<sup>1</sup> The first regular settlement which started in 1860 took eighteen years to complete (i.e. in 1878), and brought about an enhancement of the total revenue demand on Oudh by 38% to Rs. 1, 42, 69, 796.

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1      W.H. Moreland, Revenue Administration of the United Province, pp. 44-46.

See also Elizabeth Whitecombe, Agrarian Condition in Northern India, pp. 124-129.

TABLE - 16

1

District Wise Assessment, 1859 - 1900.

(in Rs.)

<u>District</u>	<u>Summary Settlement (in Rs.)</u>	<u>First Regular Settlement</u>	<u>Enhance- ment (%)</u>	<u>Second Regular Settlement</u>	<u>Enhance ment (%)</u>
Lucknow	6,86,986	8,02,657	17	9,86,569	23
Rai-Barelli	9,47,917	12,39,189	31	16,07,628	30
Unao	11,76,185	12,87,271	9	15,45,303	20
Faizabad	8,70,188	11,68,462	34	14,61,922	25
Sultanpur	9,03,013	12,37,677	37	14,86,353	20
Pratapgarh	7,30,534	9,85,619	35	13,46,522	36
Gonda	9,62,401	15,16,487	60	17,70,189	15
Kheri	4,91,922	8,02,411	63	10,28,510	28
Bahraich	5,79,706	10,91,656	72	11,29,505	13
Hardoi	10,16,712	13,30,139	31	15,53,027	17
Bara Banki	11,93,634	15,84,534	33	20,76,921	30
Sitapur	9,39,897	13,03,694	38	16,15,760	24
Total	1,04,99,295	1,42,69,796	38	1,76,08,290	23

In many areas of Oudh the reclamation of waste land and extension of cultivation increased the agricultural produce,

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1 Metcalf, T.R. Land Landlords and the British Raj, p. 203.

naturally the profits of landholding class increased. Inspite of this extension, elsewhere the situation was different, therefore, the payment of revenue instalment became difficult, resulted into the mounting up of arrears. In the Khandasa pargana of Faizabad district revenue was enhanced to about 70%. Agricultural conditions became worse by the fact that the bad seasons of 1871 and 1872.<sup>1</sup> In the Dharampur pargana of Bahraich district assessment was enhanced nearly three times of the summary jamma.<sup>2</sup> In the Kheri district revenue was raised by 140%.<sup>3</sup>

Arrears in consequence increased rapidly. In Faizabad district balances reached over a lakh of rupees. In Kheri and Hardoi the situation was almost the same.

In the whole of the province of Oudh, by the year 1872, arrears mounted upto the amount of Rupees 6, 52, 218. For details see the following table:-

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- 1      A.F. Millet, Faizabad Settlement Report (Alld, 1880) pp. 473-76.
  - 2      Oudh Revenue Administration Report for 1872-73 (Lucknow, 1874), Part I, p. 24.
  - 3      Ibid. p. 58, see also Nevill, Kheri District Gazetteer, pp. 111-14.

TABLE - 17

Annual Revenue Balance (in Rupees)<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Faizabad District</u>	<u>Oudh Total</u>
1864-65	35, 915	87, 390
1865-66	3, 300	32, 044
1866 (5 months)	94, 159	2,62, 838
1866-67	78, 678	1,71, 736
1867-68	2,54, 362	5,87, 893
1868-69	65, 845	3,54, 202
1869-70	2, 833	1,45, 375
1870-71	18, 707	2,91, 499
1871-72	99, 903	5,61, 068
1872-73	1,75, 202	6,52, 218

After seeing all these arrears the government finally accepted the severity of assessment and from 1870 onwards all uncollected balances were remitted and permanent reductions were granted in the new assessment especially in the hard hit areas.<sup>2</sup>

Almost the entire Kheri district was resettled and the enhancement was brought down from 140%, to 73%<sup>3</sup> above the Summary Settlement demand. About half of the

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1 Metcalf, T.R., p. 205.

2 In 1873 on quarter of the revenue demand was remitted for the entire district of Faizabad. For more information see also Oudh Revenue Administration Report 1872-73, Part I, pp. 13-27.

3 Nevill, Kheri District Gazetteer, pp. 114-15.

villages of the Hardoi district were resettled and total<sup>1</sup>  
land revenue demand was reduced by 7%.

At the expiry of first regular settlement second  
was carried out during 1890s and it resulted in substan-  
tial growth of revenue demand. The enhancement was 23%  
of the first settlement jamma and 67.7% of the amount of<sup>2</sup>  
Summary Settlement.

It is evident from the revenue statistics avail-  
able for the **province** that in most of the districts  
revenue demand during 1890s is less than that of 1860s.  
Revenue balances were uncommon like first Regular Settle-  
ment.

We thus see that the revenue demand in the next  
Settlement or revision has to show a rising tendency. It  
is rather immaterial at what proportion. This may fairly  
be gathered from another set of figures to follow

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1        Nevill, Hardoi District Gazetteer, pp. 104-05.

2        See the Table -16, p.55.

TABLE - 18

Land Revenue Demand in Oudh (in thousands of rupees).<sup>1</sup>

<u>District</u>	<u>1880-81</u>	<u>1890-91</u>	<u>1900-01</u>
Rae-Bareilly	974	1244	1502
Faizabad	1113	1127	1352
Unnao	1204	1327	1650
Pratapgarh	953	996	1226
Sitapur	1355	1300	1498
Sultanpur	1068	1177	1415
Bahraich	977	904	1153
Barabanki	1677	1558	1893
Kheri	744	830	903
Lucknow	609	716	848
Gonda	1509	1503	1573
Hardoi	1329	1349	1483

The table shows that between 1890-91 and 1900-01, land revenue demand registered a maximum growth, while between 1880-81 and 1890-91 except for four, all district have to exhibit the upward trend. One thing also became clear that enhancement was much **sharper** than in the preceeding decade. The average rate of assessment in Oudh was Rs. 1-11-9 per acre while in North-Western Provinces it was Rs. 1-11-4 per acre.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Majid Hayat, Agrarian Unrest in Northern India, pp. 45-46.

2 Baden Powell, Land Systems of British India, Vol.2, pp. 263.



The district of Barabanki had 8, 23, 011 acres of available land. In 1870 the land revenue for the district was fixed at Rs. 12,55,840 or Rs. 1-8 per acre. The rate per acre on land under cultivation was Rs. 2-4-7 and on arable area Rs. 1-15-1<sup>1</sup> per acre. At the time of annexation (in 1856) the land revenue demand for Barabanki was Rs. 8,35,994 but later on during the years 1865 to 1867 it was enhanced to Rs. 12,25,210 to mean an increase of 40%.<sup>2</sup> After first Regular Settlement the land revenue of Barabanki district was assessed at Rs. 15,64,534. In 1871 and 1872 the revenue collection for the district was Rs. 15,75,056 and 15,75,217<sup>3</sup> respectively.

In Faizabad district the land revenue prior to 1864 was Rs. 8,36,902; since then it was increasing year by year. It enhanced upto Rs. 3,48,729 by 1872; the enhancement was 41%. The revenue assessment in 1872 touched the mark of Rs. 11,85,631.<sup>4</sup> It was found that in 1872 the revenue collection was Rs. 11,24,460 i.e. 94.8%<sup>5</sup> of the assessed jamma.

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1 Gazetteer of Oudh, Vol. I, p. 228.

2 Ibid., p. 249.

3 Ibid., p. 248.

4 Ibid., p. 443.

5 Ibid.

Gonda too had the similar effects of revenue enhancement trends. In 1856, the year of annexation the land revenue was Rs. 9,66,983 and continued so till its reoccupation.<sup>1</sup> It was decided by the government that the enhancement would be taken gradually by steps spread<sup>2</sup> over the next ten years.

TABLE - 19

The Revenue For Gonda for the Next Ten Years.<sup>3</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rs.</u>
1873-74	15,56,581
1874-75	15,56,581
1875-76	15,57,689
1876-77	15,93,934
1877-78	16,20,224
1878-79	16,50,584
1879-80	16,52,791
1880-81	16,58,130
1881-82	16,62,030
1882-83	16,70,335
1883-84	17,01,958

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1 Ibid., pp. 548-49.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

During ten years the growth was only 9.3% i.e. less than one percent per annum. For the year 1872-73, the land<sup>1</sup> revenue collection in the district was Rs. 14,42,676. A close examination of the available data for each district of Oudh reveals that the land revenue demand rose steadily between 1860 and 1900.

Till now we have seen that with the introduction of Saharanpur Rule of 1855, the government decided to fix the land revenue demand at 50% of the rental. But it is interesting to note that landholders as well as cultivators always paid more than 50% because of the additional cesses. Government introduced these cesses or taxes for specific local purposes such as schools and roads.

It was emphasized that the poverty stricken people of India were unable to pay the direct taxes for public works, consequently government induced to raise such funds from the land along with and in addition to the land<sup>2</sup> revenue. In Bengal the rate of these cesses were 6.25% and realized from both landholders and cultivators but in northern India it was levied for roads, schools, post-offices, dispensary, famine, patwari, chokidars and

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1. Ibid., p. 532.

2. R.C. Dutt, Open Letters to Curzon, p. 76.

amounted to 8.25% on the rental.<sup>1</sup> These cesses were assessed on rent and paid by the landholders along with land revenue. It was noticed that whenever the land revenue were raised at the time of revision of Settlement, cesses too were enhanced. Naturally the purpose of fixing the land revenue at 50% of rental proved farce, when it was decided to levy another 6% or 8% on rental under the name of cesses.<sup>2</sup>

In the North-Western Provinces a road cess at the rate of 1% and an educational cess at 1% was levied. In 1870-71, these cesses produced 44,130 pound and 30,037 pound respectively.<sup>3</sup> In the Banaras region educational cess was not compulsory, resulted into the unequal collection of both these cesses, though levied at the same rate. District postal cess at the rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$ % fetched 8,2427 pound in 1870-71.<sup>4</sup> Again in the same province an amount of 181,240 was collected for the maintenance of village watchman.<sup>5</sup> The incidence of this cess varied from 4% to 6% and charged on the land in Settlement, but bore no definite proportions to the land revenue.<sup>6</sup> In most of

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1 R.C. Dutt, Open Letters to Curzon, p. 76.

2 Ibid.

3 British Parliamentary Papers, East India Colonies, 21 I.U.P., 1973, p. 169.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

the districts of North-Western Provinces a system had been adopted by which a general cess of 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ % was levied monthly for village watchman<sup>1</sup>. The majority of the provinces were settled temporarily but Banaras division was settled permanently and contributed about ( 1/7th (14%) of the revenue of the whole of the North-Western Provinces.<sup>2</sup>

With the result of new assessment local cesses had been fixed at 10% on the revenue or 5% on the assumed rental; and this was used for roads, schools, posts, village police and general improvements.<sup>3</sup> The rates chargeable on lands, excluding the village accountant cess amounted to 268654 pounds i.e. about a rate of 2·d per unit of population.<sup>4</sup> In the North-Western Provinces a cess at the rate of 3% on the rental was levied for the payments of village accountant, and generated in 1870-71, 161,000 pounds.<sup>5</sup> In 1882 (Act XIII) the patwari cess which had been levied earlier at the rate of 6% on the revenue was abolished (it amounted to something over 24 lakhs of rupees in the year of abolition).<sup>6</sup>

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- 1 British Parliamentary Papers, East India Colonies, 21 IUP, 1873, p. 169.
  - 2 Ibid., p. 170
  - 3 Ibid.
  - 4 Ibid.
  - 5 Ibid.
  - 6 Baden Powell, Land System of British India, Vol.2, p. 284.

In the province of Oudh  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ , cess on the land revenue has been levied since the first Settlement. The share of the cess on the gross rental was  $1\frac{1}{4}\%$ . The amount of realized cess has been applied to the construction and maintenance of roads, education and district postal communication in the following proportions.<sup>1</sup>

Education 1%

Roads 1%

District Post  $\frac{1}{4}\%$

Unappropriated amount  $\frac{1}{4}\%$

This cess was levied on lands which were revenue free as well as on lands which paid it.<sup>2</sup>

In 1871-72 the land revenue of Oudh was about 1,360,000 pound and  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  cess realized in the same period was 32,479 pound.<sup>3</sup>

In the Oudh, village Chowkidars were maintained at the expense of landholders. They were paid through land grants, which could fetch a rent of 24 rupees per annum.<sup>4</sup> If the lands of such quality was not granted the landholders were compelled to pay the amount in cash or

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1 British Parliamentary Papers: East India Colonies, 21 I.U.P., 1973, p. 165.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

to resort to a cash payment of 36 rupees per annum, paid through the Deputy Commissioner and levied with the<sup>1</sup> government revenue.

The rate of cesses in Oudh and North-Western Provinces was raised in 1878 by an additional famine cess<sup>2</sup> of 2% on the revenue.

A separate cess was taken for the cost of patwari, when they were village servants, but this was abolished in 1882. Owing to the economic constraints the government restored it in 1889.<sup>3</sup> The Patwari cess under the Act IX of 1889 was also 2% on the annual value (comes to 4% on<sup>4</sup> the revenue).

Initially under the British rule the economic rent, that is (the whole of the produce except what was sufficient to keep the cultivators alive and at work) was taken from the cultivators. The principle of fair rent was not practised. The fair rent can be described as a rent sufficiently below the economic rent to leave an adequate incentive to<sup>5</sup> the best efforts of cultivators.

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1 British Parliamentary Papers: East India Colonies, 21 I.U.P., 1973, p. 165.

2 Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 122. See also Baden Powell, Vol. 2, op.cit., p. 70.

3 Baden Powell, Vol. 2, op.cit., p. 263.

4 Ibid.

5 W.H. Moreland, Revenue Administration of the United Province, p. 53.

As we know that the cash rents depends on many historical circumstances e.g. the State of prices and degree of prosperity of the tenant at the time of conversion; the character of the landlord and so on. In certain regions caste was one of the important factors in determining the rent rates. In Oudh and in the eastern districts of the North-Western Provinces, the high caste tenants paid 4 annas less in the rupee. In the western<sup>1</sup> districts it was less or even non existent.

Relatively speaking the tenants of large estates paid less than the tenants of small proprietors, who indeed were compelled by their poverty to exact at the maximum limit. The difference is marked particularly in Oudh where the rent of taluqdars estates were about 20%<sup>2</sup> lower than that of small proprietors. Before considering the factors and forces responsible for the movement of rents, it would be better if we look at the magnitude of rent fluctuations.

In the Aligarh district at the Settlement of<sup>3</sup> 1838-40 the average rent was fixed at Rs. 3.18 per acre.

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1      Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. xxiv, p. 191.

2      Ibid.

3      District Gazetteer of Aligarh, p. 118.



In 1868 it was fixed at Rs. 4.19 for occupancy and Rs. 4.16 per acre for non occupancy tenants and this increase amounted to 27%.<sup>1</sup> This enhancement was attributed to the extension of cultivation and the improvement of irrigation facilities.<sup>2</sup> During the currency of Settlement further rise took place. The occupancy rent rose to Rs. 5.38 per acre, whereas the increase in the rent of tenant at will was enormous, i.e. from Rs. 5.16 to Rs.7.11 per acre, that is 70% increase.<sup>3</sup> This high percentage growth appears not very plausible. The inaccuracy in the recorded rental appears on account of short collections. Therefore, if we deduct 10% and making due allowances for the inaccuracy there remained a rise of at least 38% growth in the rent which corresponds closely with the rise in the value of agricultural produce.<sup>4</sup>

During the time of revision of Settlement which was effected between 1865 and 1870, the Meerut district experienced an increase in both cultivation and irrigation; prices and rents also registered a growth while at the same time government demand was reduced from 2/3rd to ½ of

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1        District Gazetteer of Aligarh, p. 118.

2        Ibid.

3        Ibid.

4        Ibid.

the rental assets. The enhancement of rent had been<sup>1</sup>  
estimated as 23% of the earlier amount.

In the next revision of Settlement in the districts the incidence of rents paid by tenant at will had<sup>2</sup> increased by no less than 89%. One of the important factors was population pressure which facilitates competitive rent and ultimately increased the letting<sup>3</sup> value of land by almost 40%.

In the Bijnor district the rent rate of sugarcane between 1865 and 1872 was Rs. 9-8-0 per acre but later on after thirty years it was enhanced to about Rs. 20 per<sup>4</sup> acre. The rent enhancement during thirty years was 110%. Two main factors were responsible for the high rent rate of sugarcane crop in the Bijnor district. One was that the land was left fallow to regain fertility for a year before planting the crop, and consequently represents two years rent; second was the rising prices of sugarcane. The rate for cotton and munda crops average about Rs. 7 per acre. For the chari crop average rent rate was Rs.4,

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1 District Gazetteer Meerut, p. 130.

2 Ibid., p. 132.

3 Ibid.

4 District Gazetteer Bijnor, p. 131.

and for vegetables, garden crops and the like the rate<sup>1</sup> was Rs. 12 or thereabouts.

The occupancy tenants paid their rents which ranges from Rs. 3-11-1 per acre in Bashta to Rs. 7-4-7 in Nagina, the average being Rs. 5 in Najibabad tahsil; Rs. 4-10-0 per acre in Bijnor and Rs. 6 in the rest of the district.<sup>2</sup> At the same time rents paid by tenant at will ranges from 4-11-7 per acre in parganas Najibabad<sup>3</sup> to Rs. 9-5-1 in Nagina. The difference in the rent rate<sup>4</sup> between these two classes of tenants was about 15%. It is noticed that in such a situation there was practically no distinction between these rents and the rents paid by sub-tenants.

Regarding the rent movements the picture is not very different in the province of Oudh. Though the magnitude of rent movement was slightly higher in Oudh, but the factor and forces responsible for upward growth was almost identical of the North-western Provinces.

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1 District Gazetteer Bijnor, 131.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 135.

4 Ibid.

By analysing village rent roll records it was found that in 1874 there was very slight increase in rents in comparison to the previous year. But these rent rolls are not very much reliable, because neither they include sir lands nor in many cases the land held<sup>1</sup> on grain rents. Much of the real increase was concealed.

Rise of rent can be visualized by the revenue survey measurements, also the leases of entire village<sup>2</sup> exhibits almost uniformly a steady rise. It is correct to mention that in many cases the lessees had lost their capital and sued for recovery; but the fact remains is that without any nominal increase in the rent rates these village lessees would not have invested such heavy amount<sup>3</sup> in bidding.

Between 1860 the year of first regular Settlement and 1882 the powers of taluqdars increased and they monopolized the benefit of surplus production, ultimately these powers and privileges of taluqdars increased the possibilities of high landlordism and greater power of<sup>4</sup> rack-renting.

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1        Gazetteer of Oudh, Vol. I, p. 149.

2        Ibid.

3        Ibid.

4        Majid Hayat, Agrarian Unrest in Northern India, p. 24. See also Metcalf, T.R. Land, Landlords and the British Raj.

Landlords exacted different rent-rates from cultivators for different type of crops. For 1872-73 in the Bahraich district the rates were as follows:<sup>1</sup>

<u>Per Acre land suited for</u>	<u>Rs.</u>	<u>A.</u>	<u>P.</u>
Rice	3	14	2
Wheat	3	14	2
Maize, barley	3	5	8
Cotton	3	8	9
Opium	9	1	2
Oilseeds	3	6	6
Sugarcane	7	7	0
Tobacco	8	4	0

In Faizabad district the rents paid by the cultivators were higher than the Bahraich district. Following are the detailed description for the period 1872-73.<sup>2</sup>

<u>Land Suited for</u>	<u>Rs/per cultivated acre</u>
Opium	9 4 0
Tobacco	9 4 0
Sugarcane	8 12 0
Wheat	6 12 0
Rice	5 1 0
Oilseeds	4 4 0
Maize	3 12 0

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1 Gazetteer of Oudh, Vol. I, p. 147.

2 Ibid., p. 414.

A more correct statement would be as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Manured crops near the village	12-8-0
Irrigated loam land	8-0-0
Unirrigated Loam land	6-0-0
Sandy Unirrigated Loam	3-8-0

With the help of above data it became obvious that the average rent rate paid by the cultivators of Faizabad was higher than the tenants of Bahraich, and one more important aspect is that the lands near the village site (goend in local dialect) paid higher rents than the out-lying areas.

When we compare the rent rates of other districts of Oudh it is clear that in Faizabad rents were higher than Gonda, but less than Barabanki district.<sup>2</sup> It would not be wrong if one suggests that rent was rising in Faizabad because of improvement of irrigation facilities mainly tanks and wells. At the same time it can also be said that the rising of rents and agricultural produce were not in the same proportion, which resulted into the no real benefit to the tenants. Most of the agricultural surplus owing to

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1 Gazetteer of Oudh, Vol. I, p. 414.

2 Ibid., pp. 425-426.

the irrigation facilities were appropriated by land proprietors sub-proprietors and many other intermediary classes and if any more surpluses after their own consumption<sup>1</sup> was left, paid to their creditors.

In Oudh only 1% of the total tenant held occupancy rights and paid their rents by less than two annas<sup>2</sup> in the rupee. Rest of them were tenant-at will whose rent could be enhanced every year if the landlord wishes so. They could also be evicted on one or another pretext.<sup>3</sup> At this moment government thought out a plan to protect the interest of this vulnerable section of tenants and ultimately passed the Oudh Rent Act of 1886; by which tenants were given statutory rights and rents could be enhanced only 6.25% after every seven years.<sup>4</sup> But this statutory protection to the peasants succeeded in a totally insignificant way.<sup>5</sup>

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1 D.N. Dhanagare, Peasant Movement in India, see also Majid Hayat, op.cit.

2 Majid Hayat, op.cit., p. 15.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 M.P. Saksena, Rent Law in Oudh, Hardoi, 1935, p. xxxv. The gift of the rule of law was in fact a theoretical postulation rendered unworkable in an unequal agrarian society.

Earlier we have mentioned the tenants of larger estates paid less rent than that of small estates. It can be more clearly understood with the help of following table.<sup>1</sup>

Tenure	Tenant-rates in Rs. per acre of cultivated area in	
	<u>Kham</u>	<u>Pukhta</u>
<u>Mau fi</u>	6.10	5.46
<u>Talugdari</u>	4.87	5.42
<u>Zamindari</u>	5.41	5.51
<u>Pattidari</u>	5.61	5.73

From the table it seems that except for maufidars,<sup>2</sup> higher the tenure lower the rent rates. Under the Kham land in which there was no under proprietors, the lowest rent was prevalent under talugdari and maximum under pattidari. In the same way rents paid to pukhtadars the least under talugdari and maximum under pattidari.

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1 Faizabad Settlement Report, 1900, p. 14.

2 The high rates were charged from tenants on maufi land is explained by the fact that as the total area of such land in any district was very small, it was economically rational for the holder of the grant to retain the best land for his own cultivation and let out the rest at high rent.



Now if we look at as a whole, we find that where there was a multiplicity of rights such as pukhtadas, rent rates were higher in comparison to the kham land where there was no such rights. In the former the average rent-rates were Rs. 5.53 and in the latter it was Rs. 5.49 per cultivated acre.

During the time of first regular Settlement of Sultanpur, it was observed that there was a systematic rise of rents.<sup>1</sup> Between first and second Settlement (1860s and 1890s) there was a 29.3% rent enhancement in the Sultanpur district.<sup>2</sup> Within the same span of time the population and the land revenue demand raised to the amount of 26.5% and 23.8% respectively which managed to keep pace with the rise of rents i.e. 29.3%; but the extension of cultivation which lagged behind was only 7.6%.<sup>3</sup>

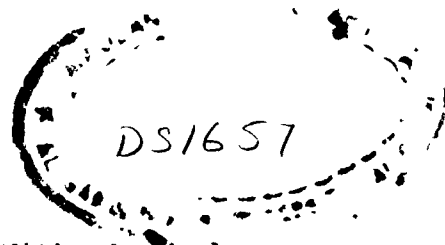
The less degree of competition for land among the tenants of Kheri and Bahraich districts, restricted the landlords from rack-renting which generally led to evictions, owing to this phenomenon the tenants paid only fair

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1 Oudh Revenue Administration Report, 1880-81,  
pp. 74-75.

2 Ibid.

3 Sultanpur Settlement Report, 1898, pp. 31-33.



and reasonable rents to the landlords.<sup>1</sup> With the help of these two instances a resultant conclusion can be derived that the rent enhancements that accompanied eviction of tenants was not uniform over the Oudh districts.<sup>2</sup>

In Pratapgarh district too the rents were rising continuously due to the enhanced value of land and the competition for land among tenants.<sup>3</sup> During 1860-61 the average rent rate was Rs. 1-10-1 per bigha but in 1868 rises to 3-1-1 per bigha.<sup>4</sup> We have seen that many factors and forces made their influence on movement of rents. Legislative action was one of them which tried to check the uncontrolled growth of rents. The rents of occupancy and non-occupancy tenants in rupees per acre are as following.<sup>5</sup>

Category	Division								Provinces		
Occupancy rents	Mee rut.	Agra	Rohil Khand	Alla habad	Bana ras.	Gora khpur	Luck now	Faiz abad	Agra	Oudh	United Province
	4.7	4.2	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.7	2.6	2.9	4.1	2.6	4.0
Non - occupancy rents	6.9	4.8	4.0	3.1	3.4	3.4	5.5	5.5	4.2	5.5	4.2

1. Oudh Rev. Admin. Report, 1880-81, p. 71.
2. Majid Hayat, op.cit., pp. 61-62.
3. Ibid., p. 62.
4. Ibid., p. 65. Quoted from W.E. Forbes, Pratapgarh Settlement Report 1877.
5. Imperial Gazetteer, vol. xxiv, pp. 192-93, see also Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol.I, pp. 68-69.

In theory the occupancy tenants in the Province of Agra were not privileged as far as rent rates were concerned, but through legislative action occupancy rents were kept low in Meerut and Agra Division, particularly where canal<sup>1</sup> was not used. The Agra law puts no limit on enhancement except the market rate.<sup>2</sup> In Oudh the occupancy tenants were small privileged body of ex-proprietors. The Oudh rent act protects both categories of tenants from enhancement of seven years and after that only 6.25% could<sup>3</sup> be enhanced.

During 1882-83 the average rents paid per acre in different divisions of North-Western Provinces are as following:<sup>4</sup>

<u>Division</u>	<u>Occupancy Tenants</u>	<u>Tenants-at will</u>
Meerut	4-2-0	4-11-9
Agra	4-1-6	4- 4-4
Rohilkhand	3-11-2	3- 5-1
Allahabad	4-4 -0	3- 8-2
Banaras	3-8-10	3- 1-0
Jhansi	3-1- 1	2- 8-7
Tarai regions.	2-0-10	3- 1-8

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Baden Powell, op.cit., p. 194.

These rates which were prevalent in North-Western Provinces were considerably lower than in Oudh where the tenants-at will (Constitutes more than 98% of the total tenants) paid<sup>1</sup> at the rate of Rs. 5-8-0 on an average per acre.

Variation of rents also depends upon the quality<sup>2</sup> of soil. It can be seen by the following table.

<u>Division</u>	<u>First class land near the village site.</u>	<u>Poorly outlying soil</u>
Meerut	15	2.5
Agra	11	1.5
Rohilkhand	10	1.5
Allahabad Doab	12	2
Allahabad Bundel Khand	4	1
Banaras	12	2
Gorakhpur	10	1.5
Oudh	15	1.5

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1      Baden Powell, op.cit., p. 194.

2      Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh,  
Vol. I, p. 69.

The commercial crops such as sugarcane, poppy, tobacco and garden crops paid special rates which varies from Rs. 5/- or even less per acre in the sub-montane districts to Rs. 150/- per acre near large towns where night soil and sweepings were used as manures.<sup>1</sup> These heavy rent rates in the vicinity of large towns were directly affected among other things by market trends.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. xxiv, p. 193, see also Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. I, p. 69.

2 Ibid.

## CHAPTER - IV

### MOVEMENT OF RENT AND REVENUE:

#### A SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS

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MOVEMENT OF RENT AND REVENUE :  
A SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS

The major source of income to the imperial exchequer was generated from the agricultural sector. To keep pace with the rising expenditure of colonial government (which after 1857 was officially integrated into the British socio-political structure) tried several measures to maximise the land revenue without allowing a repetition of the experience of 1857. But as the government was aware that the main obstacle was the intermediary class, because they intercepted the bulk of the revenues from agriculture. The government owing to its alien character and paucity of trained personnel, found it impossible to penetrate into the revenue units directly without the intercession of these zamindars and talugdars.

If we look into the revenue settlement pattern we find that the government assessment was based on the average of previous decades revenue records. This average was mostly based on the statistics supplied by the village patwaris, who were generally the servants of the zamindars. The assessment of the government thus based on those very people whose share it intended to reduce. Needless to say the assessment was much lower than the actual collection, a larger bulk of it was going into the hands of the village

zamindars and taluqdars. The government was for all  
1  
practical purposes at their mercy.

The utilitarians notably J.S. Mill, Holt Mackenzie and R.M. Bird etc. were of the opinion that the intermediary class were parasitic in nature, living at the cost of actual cultivators. They, therefore, proposed that the settlement should be made with the village communities directly. But it was better said than done. For, when the government did attempt to establish direct control with the peasants, thereby rupturing the autonomy of the village elites, it found itself confronted with the most severe threat to its political power in India - the revolt  
2  
of 1857.

After crown's take over the British revenue policy seems to have been guided by two contradictory pulls; one the pressing need to maximise the revenue realization and the other to keep the landed aristocracy pacified. Obviously the former to undone the war expenses  
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and the latter to check the recurrence of 1857.

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1 Metcalf, T.R. Land, Landlords and the British Raj, see also Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, Majid Hayat, op.cit., and Metcalf, T.R. After Math of Revolt.

2 Ibid.

3 Majid Hayat, op.cit.



As we have seen in the previous chapter the land revenue demand of the United Provinces was rising continuously upto the first quarter of <sup>the</sup> 20th century. But the real increase in land revenue can better be studied through investigating the movements of prices, extension of cultivation, irrigation improvement, letting value of land and many other factors which one way or the other could be held responsible for rent and revenue fluctuations.

In the North-western Provinces the land revenue enhancement between 1858 and 1862 was almost 50%; and in the next 20 years it has risen to 10%.<sup>1</sup> During the thirty years period (1830s to 1860s) cultivated area expanded to about 31%.<sup>2</sup> Even in the densely populated district Farrukha-<sup>3</sup> bad the area under cultivation increased around 24.4%. Irrigation also made great improvement not merely through canals, but through the extension of well irrigated areas.

After the revision of settlement (1866-72) it was noticed that during thirty years period in the Serouli pargana of Bareilly district, the enhancement of land

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- 1      Baden Powell, Land System of British India, Vol. I, p. 380.
  - 2      Dharam Kumar (ed.) The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. II, p. 54.
  - 3      Ibid.

revenue was accompanied with the 44% increase in the prices of agricultural produce; and a 47% increase in the cultivation.<sup>1</sup>

In the Meerut district the area under cultivation during 1836 was somewhat less than 57% of the whole area.<sup>2</sup> In 1860 it increased to about 69% and in 1902 the area under cultivation reached to 72%.<sup>3</sup> Between 1836 and 1902, the growth of cultivation was 27.77% in the Meerut district.<sup>4</sup> Irrigation facilities very much affected the cultivation of commercial crops. The area under sugarcane and maize increased when canal water was introduced. In 1836, the irrigated area in Meerut district was around 27% of the cultivated area and by 1890s it increased to about 60%.<sup>5</sup>

As we know that the land revenue in Meerut district (between 1835 and 1901) was enhanced to 60%,<sup>6</sup> and prices of staple food grains also showed an upward trend. Wheat's prices in fifty years (1850-1900), for example, increased by 53%, gram by 43% and Maize by 42%.<sup>7</sup>

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1 Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, p. 107.

2 Nevill, Meerut District Gazetteer, p. 44.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., p. 48.

6 Ibid., pp. 47-48.

7 Ibid., p. 60.

Government's income from land revenue, owing to the improved efficiency of collections is said to have increased. In 1872-73, the percentage of balance on demand<sup>1</sup> was only 0.08; which is almost negligible.

In the Upper Doab region, Aligarh district representing almost the same phenomenon. Land revenue<sup>2</sup> demand was enhanced to 34% (from 1834-40 to 1870-1901), whereas the area under cultivation in 1852 was 877,288 acres, which finally extended to 922,488 acres or 74.07%<sup>3</sup> in 1906-07. As far as irrigation is concerned the actual figures appears for the decade 1884-85 to 1893-84 in<sup>4</sup> which 49.9% of the cultivated area was under irrigation. During 1906-07, 49.97% of the entire cultivated area was<sup>5</sup> under brought/cultivation. Most of the expansion in irrigation was mainly due to the extension of canals.

In land revenue enhancement prices played a very significant role. From 1858 to 1877 (twenty years span) prices of wheat rose by 23%; barley 20.6%; juar by 19% and<sup>6</sup> bajra by 21.8%.

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1 Atkinson, E.T. Op.cit., Vol. III, p. 315.

2 See Chapter III.

3 Aligarh District Gazetteer, p. 38.

4 Ibid., p. 43.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., pp. 54-55.

Improved collection efficiency again worked and reduced the balance between demand and collection from 6.58% in 1860-61 to 0.02% in 1872-73.<sup>1</sup>

In the enhancement in land revenue demand in Bulandshahr was accompanied by the extension of cultivation. Cultivation rose between 1848 and 1902 by 32.35%;<sup>2</sup> and during the forty years (roughly 1850s to 1890s) there was enormous rise in the proportion of wheat to total cultivation in the district. In the year 1870-77 the total irrigated area was amounted to 41.24% of the entire cultivation,<sup>3</sup> but later on in 1901 the area under irrigation was extended to 48.8%.<sup>4</sup>

According to another set of figures, in Bulandshahr district, the enhancement of land revenue by 27% during 24 years (1848 to 1871) was accompanied by 15% extension of cultivation<sup>5</sup> and rise of prices of staple food grains between 1858 to 1867. Wheat rose by 30%, rice by 27.7%<sup>6</sup> barely by 45.6% and gram by 43%. The growth rate of

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1 Atkinson E.T., op.cit., Vol. II, p. 427.

2 Bulandshahr District Gazetteer, p. 31.

3 Atkinson E.T., op.cit., Vol. III, p. 21.

4 Bulandshahr District Gazetteer, p. 44.

5 Atkinson, E.T., op.cit., Vol. III, p. 58.

6 Ibid., p. 78.

latter two crops was more steep than the former. The collection of land revenue in the district also improved enormously. In 1860-61 and 1861-62 the percentage of balance on demand was 13.43, and 3.25 respectively, but later on in 1871-72 and 1872-73 it reduced to 0.19 and 0.13.<sup>1</sup>

and  
Comparatively to Oudh/the doab region of North-Western Provinces, the Jhansi district of Bundelkhand region was scarcely populated and the large area was covered by hilly tracts. Irrigation was meagre and the problem of natural calamities e.g. famines and droughts were frequent. . This may be understood with the help of available statistical data given below.

Between 1866-72 and 1886-87,<sup>2</sup> the land revenue in Jhansi district was enhanced to 13%. In 1864 ( at the time of first Settlement) in Jhansi region only 48% of the total area was under cultivation, where as in Lalitpur<sup>3</sup> a very low percentage of 23% was under cultivation. Between 1889 and 1892 (at the time of Second Settlement) the cultivated area of Jhansi declined to 42%. Between

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1 Atkinson, E.T. op.cit., Vol. III, p. 59.

2 See Chapter III.

3 District Gazetteer of Jhansi, p. 39.

1902 and 1906 it further declined to 33%.<sup>1</sup> Irrigation facilities varied from region to region. In the black soil area only 2.7% in Jhansi proper and 2.48% in Lalitpur, whereas in the red soil tract 21.49% in Jhansi and 23.3% in Lalitpur.<sup>2</sup> In the two regions are taken together, the proportion of irrigation to the cultivated area would be 8.8% for the entire district.<sup>3</sup>

The prices of food grains in the region rose and fell frequently and caused alternatively good harvest or famines. Between 1858-60 and 1881 the prices of wheat rose by 15.2%, gram by 20.8%, and Juar by 18%.<sup>4</sup> Owing to good harvest during the next decade prices fell and almost reached at the level of 1871 to 1881. This change can be noticed by the fact that price hike between 1860 and 1890 (thirty years span) was marginal. Wheat rose by 0.58%; gram by 3.2% and Juwar by 5.2% only.<sup>5</sup> Again in the decade 1890 to 1901 prices of food grains hiked sharply due to the bad crops,<sup>6</sup> and this situation continued till 1906.<sup>7</sup>

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1 District Gazetteer of Jhansi, p. 39.

2 Ibid., pp. 47-48.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 68.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

The Basti district in the eastern region of North-western Provinces had to depict almost the similar picture of what we have discussed relating to upper doab region as well as the Oudh districts.

Between 1840 and 1860 the land revenue was enhanced to nearly 33%, while the cultivation in the same period increased by 17%.<sup>1</sup> Again between 1860 and 1890<sup>2</sup> land revenue was raised by 46%, and the cultivation in the same period extended to 20%. The prices of staple food grains rose by atleast 33%.<sup>3</sup> For the period of forty years (1860 to 1890) the available data reveals that the<sup>4</sup> prices of agricultural products increased by about 40%.

Major part of the cultivated area of the district was rain fed. However from 1885 we get data of irrigation. Between 1885 and 1894 about 41.4% of the cultivated land was artificially irrigated and from 1895 to 1904 the<sup>5</sup> proportion irrigated area increased to 44.3%.

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1 District Gazetteer of Basti, pp. 118-119.

2 See Chapter III.

3 District Gazetteer of Basti, pp. 118-119.

4 Ibid., pp. 56-57.

5 Atkinson, E.T. Op.cit., Vol. VI , p. 668.

The collection of land revenue in the district was very impressive. If we look at the figures for land revenue demand and actual collection (figures given in an earlier chapter) then, it would seem that balance was decreasing. In 1868-69 only Rs. 6,254 or 0.61% was left<sup>1</sup> as balance. In the year 1877-78 the percentage of the<sup>2</sup> deficit further declined to 0.09.

Gorakhpur, another district of eastern region, though permanently settled also witnessed an enhancement of land revenue which amounted to 45% during nine years<sup>3</sup> (1868-69 to 1877-78). At the time of Settlement (1866-71), 62.9% of the entire district excluding forest was brought<sup>4</sup> under cultivation. Later on tracts of forest were re-claimed for tillage. Between 1871 and 1888 extension of land under cultivation was 19.5% and by the end of the next decade it increased to 27.4% of the total district<sup>5</sup> area. As a whole between 1866-67 and 1897-98, the exten-<sup>6</sup>sion of cultivation in Gorakhpur was 28.96%. Irrigation

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1 Atkinson, E.T. Op.cit., Vol. VI , p. 668.

2 See Chapter III.

3 District Gazetteer of Gorakhpur, p. 40.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.



facilities though started late but improved satisfactorily. In four years time (i.e. 1883-84 to 1887-88) about 28.42% of the cultivated area was irrigated land<sup>1</sup> and during the next two decades it increased to 32.14%.<sup>2</sup>

It seems that the construction of railways at Gorakhpur through improving transport facilities is said to have boosted up the market economy. Prices rose and became identical with other markets of United Provinces.<sup>3</sup> The rise in food grains prices in 45 years (1861 to 1885) was 18% and the total growth between 1861 and 1905 was 46%.<sup>4</sup>

As in other districts of the United Provinces the government had improved their efficiency regarding the collection of the dues. In 1868-69 the balance was Rs. 10,866,<sup>5</sup> whereas in 1877-78 when the land revenue was enhanced by 45%,<sup>6</sup> the deficit reduced to become only a negligible amount of Rs. 90.<sup>7</sup>

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1 District Gazetteer of Gorakhpur, p. 40.

2 Ibid., pp. 55.

3 Ibid., pp. 65-66

4 Ibid.

5 See Chapter III.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

It has been suggested earlier that the rising trend in land revenue demand was a common feature of the whole United Provinces and it accompanied with growth of land under cultivation, irrigation facilities, price hike, extension of land under commercial crops, and increase in the value of lands; Oudh was not an exception to all these developments of which the effects with the introduction of railways became still more intensified and felt.

In Oudh between 1858 and 1868 the extension of land under cultivation was about 49% of the total area.<sup>1</sup> Later on the growth rate became slow<sup>2</sup> but from 1880 onwards it rapidly increased and by<sup>3</sup> 1901 reached to 56%.

Prices of staple food grains in Oudh rose more sharply than<sup>4</sup> the area under cultivation, irrigation and even land revenue. During forty years period (1861 and 1901)<sup>5</sup> the prices of rice rose by 66% ; while the prices

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1 Gazetteer of Oudh, Vol. I, p. 155. The land under cultivation in 1858 was 509742 acres which increased to 837253 acres in 1868. The increase was about 68% ; but in latter years fallow land was included. By deducting 85,000 acres as fallow, the actual area under cultivation decreased to 752,000 acres and thus the real increase was only 49%.

2 Dharma Kumar (ed.) Op.cit., p. 63.

3 Gazetteer of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. II, p. 146.

4 We know from white combe's study that the expansion of commercial agriculture and the extent of cultivated area was mostly a feature of the Western United Provinces.

5 Majid Hayat, Op.cit., pp. 94-95.

of wheat rose no less than 77.8%.<sup>1</sup>

The resumption of maufi lands (revenue free) and after wards their inclusion in assessed area led to the increase in total land revenue demand.

In 1839 the land revenue demand for Saharanpur district increased by Rs. 1,25,000 in a single year<sup>2</sup> obviously on account of resumption of land grants. By 1840 some 2,81,241 acres<sup>3</sup> of land had been resumed in the Rohilkhand division. As late as 1870 there was still about 660,276 acres of land remained as revenue free, in which small portion was granted by the government as<sup>4</sup> rewards for the loyalty during the rebellion of 1857.

In Jalaun district during 1841-43 when major part of the district came under British government, 14% of land<sup>5</sup> was held as maufi.

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1       Majid Hayat; op.cit., pp. 94-95.

2       Dharama Kumar (ed.) Op.cit., p. 51.

3       Ibid.

4       Ibid.

5       Ibid., p. 70.

Around 1880-81 maufi lands consisted of 5.2% of the total cultivated area of Oudh whereas at the time of first regular Settlement (1860-65) it had consisted of 7%.<sup>1</sup> In Rae-Bareilly, Pratapgarh and Sultanpur districts, rent and revenue free lands occupied 9.4%; 7.9%, and 8.3% of the total area under cultivation, but subsequently by 1880-81 it had decreased to 6.1%; 4.9% and 3.2%.<sup>2</sup>

It is difficult to give exact quantitative figure for total area of maufi land, resumed and total amount of land revenue enhanced thereby for the whole of the United Provinces. Nevertheless a few instances noted above may suffice to believe that on account of resumption of maufi lands, total land revenue demand substantially increased.

Before the British government the fixation of rent was based on customary basis; but with the coming of British government in general and by the passing of the Act X of 1859 in particular competitive rent (based on land man ratio)<sup>3</sup> had been introduced. As far as pure

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1 Majid Hayat, Op.cit., p. 40.

2 Ibid.

3 Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, p. 111.

competition was concerned it was not practicable in the Indian Agricultural Situation, because the major share of the agricultural produce was used up for their (cultivators) own consumption. On the contrary to this in European countries especially in Britain intensive cultivation was started mainly for the market. Many other factors e.g. customary trend, slow growth of agricultural infrastructure such as credit societies and transportation problems checked the way of pure competition.

One of the important determining factors which led to the competitive rent was the population growth. In the large part of the province population growth took place and competition for land became effective within a very few years over a large part of the province. In the United Provinces when there was abundance of land and the scarcity of hands to work of, there was meagre chance for the competitive rent. During the second revision of Settlement (1866-72) most of the culturable land was brought under cultivation, but the population was growing continuously with a certain pace which ultimately created an imbalance between these two (population and availability of cultivable land) naturally led to the pressure of population on the limited land; when the land was in demand

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1 Moreland, Op.cit., p. 62.

2 Dharama Kumar (ed.), Op.cit., p. 72.

rent rose steadily, and holdings decrease in size.<sup>1</sup>

In the United Province, the pressure of population<sup>2</sup> on soil was greater than in any other province of India. In 1901 it was found that the number of persons per square mile in the province on average were 445. But land<sup>3</sup> man ratio had considerable variation in different regions. The Himalayan tract with its forest land supported only 95 persons per square mile, and the infertile land of Central Indian Plateau and hilly Mirzapur district had an almost equal density of 197 and 192. In the doab region there was a gradual increase of population from<sup>4</sup> west to east. In Garhwal only 79 persons were found to each square mile, while in Ballia district there was<sup>5</sup> 791 persons.

It was not only population growth which tended to change the pace but many other factors also contributed for the same cause. Now we have to see that how much the prices of agricultural produce influenced the rent movement.

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- 1      Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. XXIV, p. 192, see also  
         Gazetteer of United Province of Agra and Oudh,  
         Vol. I, p. 60.
- 2      Ibid., p. 161.
- 3      Ibid.
- 4      Ibid.
- 5      Ibid.

Prices influenced the rent but only in those<sup>1</sup> tracts where there was competition for land. The effect of these two, the price rise and population pressure, enhanced the sale value of land, consequently led to the<sup>2</sup> enhancement of rent. The process of enhancement was that the rents of inferior land was raised to equal the rate<sup>3</sup> of superior land. The landlords applied another formula in which instead of enhancing the rent rate per bigha,<sup>4</sup> they reduced the size of the bigha. In the backward region where population was thin, prices have absolutely no effect on the rent rates, their only effect was to<sup>5</sup> influence the area under cultivation. But in the long<sup>6</sup> run prices had some effect. Between 1870 and 1880 it was found that there was a loose connection between price and<sup>7</sup> rents. It has been noted earlier that rents responded<sup>8</sup> slowly to the stimulus of a rise in prices. In fact over a large part of the country rents were hardly based on<sup>9</sup> prices.

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1 Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. XXIV, p. 192.

2 W. Crooke, North-Western Provinces of India, p. 342.

3 Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. XXIV, p. 192.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

After many ups and downs prices showed the steady rise during 1860s and onwards. Bulandshahr district registered the price enhancement of 90% during thirty years span and the enhancement of rent was between 65% and 70%.<sup>1</sup> In Kanpur the prices of wheat rose by 42% (upto 1890)<sup>2</sup> but there was practically no effect on rent. During the thirty years span (1840 to 1870) in the North-western Provinces, the price rise was from 25% to 50%, but the remarkable thing was that there was no corresponding<sup>3</sup> movement of rent.

In most of the cases rent rates had not kept pace with the increase in prices, cultivation and irrigation. This slow growth of rent was prevailing due to the custom, in which it was supposed that the rents of occupancy tenants would not alter for the period of thirty years of Settlement.<sup>4</sup>

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1 W. Crooke, op.cit., p. 342.

2 Ibid.

3 Dharma Kumar (ed.) Op.cit., p. 57; In 1870 Robert Knight, the editor of Indian Economist Charged that the government was destroying the opportunity of raising the revenue demand in tune with the price rise, but in 1872 and 1873 Auckland Colvin sensed the political danger in raising revenue because of the remarkable 'stickiness of rent'.

4 Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, p. 109.



The rent rates of tenant-at will (pahi and gair maurusi) had been readily enhanced. Even William Muir acknowledged the increase of land revenue was followed by a corresponding increase in rents.<sup>1</sup> The same suspicion was pointed out by R.C. Dutt.<sup>2</sup> At this stage government also accepted that the enhancement of land revenue was a major factor which triggered off a wave of rent increase on the cultivators.<sup>3</sup> In spite of all these things it would be wrong to suppose that the peasant rent was unaffected by the classical stimuli of increased prices and greater differential productivity.<sup>4</sup> The main contention is that in spite of agricultural improvement, enhanced uniform prices, market facilities, and also credit facilities though limited, rent did not increase in the same proportion and hence failed to evolve pure competition rent in true sense.

In Farrukhabad district prices of wheat between 1850 to 1890 increased by 223%.<sup>5</sup> The increase in prices led

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- 1 Dharma Kumar (ed) Op.cit., p. 57. This statement was much more correct for North-Western Provinces.
  - 2 R.C. Dutt, Open Letters to Curzon.
  - 3 Dharma Kumar (ed.) Op.cit., p. 57. A.B. Patterson was of the view that in the every district during thirty years (1842-1872) the rent was determined by the severity or lightness of the revenue demand comparatively to a small extent by the productiveness of the soil. From Aligarh and Kanpur, their collectors reported the same.
  - 4 Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, p. 109.
  - 5 Irfan Habib, 'Colonialization of the Indian Economy', Social Scientist, No. 32, pp. 44-45.

to the enhancement of rent but not in the same proportion, while the land revenue remained almost stationary for the whole period of settlement.<sup>1</sup>

The caste superiority and power of the landlords in the region concerned was one of the crucial factor in deciding the rent rates; and generally they obtain a rent<sup>2</sup> considerably above the rent assessed by the government. It is owing to this fact that the actual incidence of the revenue on the adjusted assests varied so greatly in different villages.<sup>3</sup>

Now the government sought to protect tenants right by introducing Rent Act of 1873, 1881, 1886 and 1901.<sup>4</sup> But all this could not carry the full expectations.

In Badaun district between 1850 and 1870 there was no discrimination interms of occupancy tenants and tenant-at will, both paid 20% of the produce value despite the background of rising prices.<sup>5</sup> By 1900, however, the

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- 1        Irfan Habib, 'Colonialization of the Indian Economy', Social Scientist, No. 32, pp. 44-46.
  - 2        Baden-Powell, Land Systems of British India, Vol. 2, p. 71.
  - 3        Ibid.
  - 4        Dharma Kumar (ed.), Op.cit., p. 58.
  - 5        Eric Stokes, Op.cit., p. 210.

occupancy tenants paid only 13% of the produce while  
tenant at will still paid 20%.<sup>1</sup> These legislation placed  
a partial brake on the rise of rents. Now the landlords  
were to avoid the restrictions introduced by Rent Acts,  
mostly the landlords of Oudh were forcefully demanding  
and collecting nazrana (unauthorised cess) for the renewal  
and the continuation of the tenants contract.<sup>2</sup>

Big landlords in Oudh adopted another device to  
evade rent legislation in which they converted the cash  
rented area into grain..rented area.<sup>3</sup> At the end of the  
tenants statutory period ( 7 years period ) he would be  
able to again convert the grain rent into cash rent with  
an enhanced rent.<sup>4</sup>

Inspite of all these leakages in the rent acts,  
it placed a remarkable check on the growth of rent rates,  
though mainly on the occupancy rent rate.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Eric Stokes, Op.cit., p. 210.

2 Dharma Kumar (ed.) Op.cit., p. 67, see also Majid Hayat, Op.cit.,

3 Majid Hayat, Op.cit., p. 65.

4 Ibid.

5 Moreland, W.H., Revenue Administration of United Provinces, p. 65.

In Oudh when the revision of Settlement was<sup>1</sup> approaching, the enhancement of rent came to a standstill. Between 1868 and 1898 the rent rose by 29% in Sultanpur,<sup>2</sup> and 50% in Pratapgarh district. The land revenue demand of Oudh increased by 43% between 1858-59 and 1871, while<sup>3</sup> in Faizabad district during 1870s demand stood about 33.37%.

R.C. Dutt attributed this enhancement of rent to the revision of Settlement, but it was not correct because the structure of tenure and the rent law that gave unlimited power of eviction to landlords were all contributing to the enhancement of rent and had taken place before the revision<sup>4</sup> of Settlement.

The power of eviction was the result of the government's recognition and legal safeguarding the<sup>5</sup> talugdari interest. Another important privilege granted to the landholders was regarding the Sir lands which were<sup>6</sup> assessed at 25% less than the general category of lands.

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1 Moreland, W.H. Revenue Administration of United Provinces, p. 65.

2 Dharma Kumar (ed.), Op.cit., p. 67.

3 Ibid.

4 Majid Hayat, op.cit., p. 73.

5 Ibid.

6 Moreland W.H., Op.cit., p. 97.

The sir holders also got the relaxation regarding the<sup>1</sup> tenancy law. In this situation landlords were almost free to negotiate the rent rates with the tenants-at will and<sup>2</sup> got fixed according to their own interest.

The customary basis of rent rates lay their interest in the topography of caste system. In the North-western Provinces particularly in the western region of doab, land-<sup>3</sup>lords and tenants had kinship ties, whereas in the eastern region of the province and in Oudh caste hierarchy was very common. The bulk of cultivators being of low caste paid higher rents and were liable to break under normal conditions after a great endurance as compared to their high<sup>4</sup> caste fellow cultivators.

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- 1 Moreland, W.H., Op.cit., p. 97 the growth of sir lands stopped in Oudh with the passing of Oudh Rent Act in 1886, in Agra the right continued to accrue until the passing of land revenue act in 1901.
  2. Ibid., p. 98, In practice the sir of small landholder is often the most important part of his proprietary, it supports him while the rest do little more the revenue payment. A large landholder often let his sir land to market gardeners for very high rents. Some times on the other hand it was used in a way approximating the English homefarm and as such it may be of the utmost value in setting an example to the cultivators of the neighbourhood.
  - 3 Eric Stokes, Op.cit., See also Metcalf, T.R. Land Landlords and the British Raj.
  - 4 Majid Hayat, Op.cit., pp. 62-63.

## CHAPTER - V

### ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

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## ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

In the pre-British days the talugdars of Oudh formed the dominant class of rent collecting intermediaries. They, with the help of local support acquired an independent political status. This status was first threatened by the British annexation of Oudh.<sup>1</sup> At first government considered them as reactionary and oppressive and, therefore, tried their best to weaken them with the tool of land revenue settlement policy. But the most important factor for the reversal of this policy was the largescale participation of Oudh talugdars in revolt and the local support they enjoyed at time of upheaval. The incidence of 1857 convinced the government that these big landlords were the natural leaders of the people.<sup>2</sup>

Owing to the political expediency the government adopted conciliatory policy and the talugdars' interests were protected. In return the talugdars gave their full support and loyalty to the Raj.<sup>3</sup>

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1 See Metcalf, T.R., 'From Raja to Landlord: The Oudh talugdar 1850-1879' in Frykenberg R.E. (ed), Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History, pp. 123-41.

2 See Metcalf T.R., 'Social effects of British Land Policy in Oudh' in Frykenberg R.E.(ed.) Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History, p. 150.

3 Metcalf, T.R. 'From Raja to Landlord', op.cit. pp.136-37.

In the North-western Provinces, after crushing the revolt, government confiscated the property of rebellious landlords and granted to those who were loyal to the government during the revolt of 1857. In the twenty-three districts of the province land assessed at Rs. 16,90,461 was confiscated and Rs. 9,18,295 were given<sup>1</sup> as a reward to the loyal landholders. For providing more strength to this policy government conferred the magister-<sup>2</sup>ial power in favour of selected large landowners.

The landowners took the advantage of increasing agricultural prosperity and population growth which was<sup>3</sup> more marked after 1860. Communication and transportation improved, irrigation extended and the competition for land was also increased.

In Mainpuri district by 1870 the average price of land had doubled to Rs. 13-4-8 from its pre-mutiny average<sup>4</sup> of 6-12-4 per acre.

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1 Metcalf, T.R., Land Landlords and the British Raj, pp. 158-160.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 161.

4 Atkinson, Statistical Account, Vol.4, p. 605, the figures given are combined averages for the two periods 1840-57 and 1858-70. Over the same period the average price of wheat rose by 55%, Ibid., pp. 621-22.



In Aligarh district between 1858 to 1865 the prices of staple food grains rose by 49% above the average<sup>1</sup> of preceeding nineteen years. Cotton price also rose<sup>2</sup> rapidly. Owing to the competition for land its value increased. During 25 years (from early 1840 to 1868) the prices of land made a record increase of about 126%. In<sup>3</sup> the Rohilkhand division too such a phenomenon was reported.

Inspite of land revenue enhancement at the time of revision of Settlements price rise of food grains and<sup>4</sup> competition for land benefited largely the big landowners.

Due to land revenue pressure and other financial constraints the small proprietors had to sell their lands to big landlords who were reported to have extended their<sup>5</sup> estates. At one stage when estates became so large that

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1 Metcalf, T.R., Op.cit., p. 161.

2 In Aligarh district cotton price rose from an average of Rs. 7-9-5 in the sixteen years before the Mutiny to Rs. 14-5-0 in the sixteen years after.

3 Metcalf, T.R. Op.cit., p. 161.

4 Ibid.

5 Aligarh Settlement Report, p. 128, Tikam Singh was buying villages, his former tenants together with other biswadari holders were being sold out of the 218 villages in the district which Thornton had awarded to the village proprietary bodies, 79 had by 1870 passed entirely out of their former occupants, other 120 had been alienated in part only and only 19 remained intact in the possession of their initial owners.

practically it was not possible to manage the affair by the landowners alone, they appointed personnels as gumashtas (agents) .

This class of service gentry developed their own interest and intercepted the large share of produce for their own.<sup>1</sup> They also purchased land sold out by petty landholders.<sup>2</sup> These two classes i.e. the talugdars and the service gentry, served one-another's interest and provided<sup>3</sup> loyalty and popular base to the British rule.

The big zamindars and talugdars were free from the compulsions of subsistence agriculture because they were rich for having enough source of income; while the small landowners on the other hand were struggling for bread and butter.<sup>4</sup> In Aligarh district it was reported that large landowners had been doing well, only the thakurs of Sikandra Rao were indebted. It was partly due to their small holdings and partly due to their incompetence limited<sup>5</sup> by caste prestige. The large landowners became fatten at

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1 Musgrave, P.J., "Landlords and Lords of the Land", Modern Asian Studies 6 (1972) pp. 257-75, See also Metcalf T.R., Cp.cit., p. 381.

2 Ibid.

3 Metcalf T.R., Cp.cit and also Aftermath of Revolt.

4 Ibid., p. 162.

5 Burkitt, W.J., Aligarh Settlement Report, pp. 5-7.

the cost of the smaller landowners, and the most severely affected class of landowners were those who owned middle<sup>1</sup> sized landed property. The rental income was not sufficient to sustain them eventually most the lands were brought under<sup>2</sup> khudkasht land.

A close examination of the price rise phenomenon reveals that the fruits of the price growth did not reach the smaller and poorer landholders. With the introduction of tenancy act, much of the benefits of price rise were<sup>3</sup> secured by the occupancy tenants i.e. rich peasants. In Aligarh district by the 1900, more than 50% of the land was<sup>4</sup> occupied by the occupancy tenants. According to Eric-Stokes, the result over the years was that the intermediate size holding were slowly "squeezed out of existence", leaving little between the large estates owners and the<sup>5</sup> cultivating proprietors.

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1 Metcalf, T.R., Op.cit., p. 163.

2 Ibid., p. 163.

3 Burkitt, W.J., Aligarh Settlement Report, pp. 8-9. The Settlement officer estimated that non-occupancy rental were 31% higher than those paid by occupancy tenants.

4. Eric-Stokes, 'The Structure of Landholding in Uttar Pradesh 1860-1948', IESHR 12 (1975), pp. 112-32, especially pp. 116-20.

After revolt, the policy of pacification adopted by the government encouraged the talugdars to enhance their rent. The customary laws which acted as barriers also broke away vis-à-vis the British indifference and therefore, land-owners jointly took to secure the share of agricultural produce as much as they could. The rise in rent started in 1860 but speeded up appreciably after 1868.<sup>1</sup>

Not only in one or two places but throughout the whole province, the illicit enhancement of rent was witnessed, yet the government did nothing. Moreland was of the opinion that the rack renting should be checked and the violaters of the law must be brought to book.<sup>2</sup> But in Butler's<sup>3</sup> opinion such type of acts would be disastrous, at a time when nationalist agitation was rising throughout the country.<sup>4</sup> The more important act was to retain the goodwill of talugdars than to start an enquiry; and so the matter of enquiry was dropped.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Metcalf, T.R., Op.cit., p. 218.

2 Ibid., pp. 228-29.

3 Butler was Deputy Commissioner of Lucknow.

4 Metcalf, T.R. Op.cit., pp. 228-29.

5 Ibid.

The nationalist agitation compelled the government to maintain good understanding with the big landowners. Therefore, the government paid only lip service to the Oudh Rent Act of 1886.<sup>1</sup>

The cultivators lacked the leadership and were in no position to contest the demands of their landlords.<sup>2</sup> But once the cultivators showed their strength with a definitive organisation in the shape of Kisan movement after 1920, then<sup>3</sup> the political balance shifted in other direction.

The Oudh Rent (amendment) Act of 1921, gave every cultivator a life tenure and it became a tangible sign of the tenant's new political strength.<sup>4</sup>

Popular rent and utilitarian philosophy, the chief exponent of which were William Jones and J.S. Mill provided the rationale for the periodical assessment of government

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1 Metcalf, T.R., Op.cit., p. 229.

2 Ibid., p. 220, cultivators did however, <sup>where</sup> they could get away with it, sometimes withhold a portion of their rent. There was also an organized Kurmi tenant protest across the provincial boarder in Allahabad during the late 1860s. Such combinations were perhaps facilitated in the N.W.P by the existence of occupancy right, which secured a stronger footing to those prospering middle peasant caste!

3 Ibid., p. 229.

4 Ibid.

revenue.<sup>1</sup> As we know that the enhanced revenue demand to squeeze the agricultural surplus from the rai-yats, had the moral support of utilitarianism. Owing to the population growth competition for land increased and in the absence of alternative employment landlords began to sublet<sup>2</sup> their lands.

In spite of all agricultural developments such as extension of cultivation, irrigation facilities, rise in prices etc., the ever rising land revenue demand caused a distress to all agricultural classes. But the economic severity was most seriously felt by the small landowners<sup>3</sup> and the lower strata of peasantry. In the whole province the pressure of revenue demand was not felt uniformly, but varied according to the availability of cultivable land and the needed capital for the investment in agricultural<sup>4</sup> pursuit. This pressure was felt in greater degree where the landowners (or malquzars responsible for the revenue demand) that is to say among the bhaichara communities of jats of upper doab and the imperfect pattidari communities

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1      Dhanagare D.N., Peasant Movements in India, p. 33.

2      Ibid.

3      Ibid., p. 34.

4      Bayly C.A. (ed.), Eric Stokes, The Peasant Armed, p. 218.

<sup>1</sup>  
of Rajputs. The economic condition of these two groups of peasant elite was not the same. The Jat communities were hard working and pragmatic enough to cultivate the land by their own, contrary to this the smaller Rajput communities<sup>2</sup> clinging to rental profits as long as they could.

Large amount of enhancement in the land revenue demand curtailed the rental profits of the petty landlords in the Banda district. Most of the landlords were Rajput and consequently they came very near to the bhaichara tenure system. But the loss of proprietary right meant only to the loss of rental profit, because these petty landowners retained their sir land<sup>3</sup> and also brought more land under such category. Whenever the opportunity was offered the small landowners tended to bring more village land under their own cultivation. This phenomenon has been

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1 Bayly C.A. (ed.), Eric Stokes, The Peasant Armed, p. 218.

2 Ibid., p. 222. In most part of the province the land transfer was effected in the pattidari tenure in which rental profits rather than direct agricultural profits played major role. Such tenures are generally associated with Rajput land control. It is noticeable, however, that Jat losses were relatively slight despite the high volume of transfer. The difference lay between the semi-rentier form of landlordism practised by the Rajput lord and the direct cultivation by Jat Communities.

3 Ibid., p. 224.

further expedited with the improvement of transportation<sup>1</sup> and irrigation facilities. The profit of direct cultivation was much more than the tributary payment i.e. the<sup>2</sup> rent. The tenancy legislation in the province also checked the unwarranted growth of rent, hence, there was little temptation to develop a rentier landlord class among the<sup>3</sup> bhaichara jat communities of North-western Provinces.

This practice of direct cultivation probably started much more earlier in the eastern district of the North-Western Provinces.<sup>4</sup> In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the proprietary castes extended their cultivation by the enlargement of sir land as well as by<sup>5</sup> taking up land on tenancy. Although these proprietary castes such as Rajputs, Brahimans and Bhuinhar adopted direct cultivation but they remained as petty landlords and exploited the lower-castes subtenants and predial<sup>6</sup> labourers for their own benefit.

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1 Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, p. 238.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., pp. 238-39.

5 U.P. Board of Revenue Administration Report 1903-4, p. 18, Rajput proprietary castes of Dhoobi talug in Jaunpur district and of the neighbouring Deogaon and Belhabans parganas of Azamgarh, brought the whole village land under sir category.

6 Eric Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, p. 239.



As we know that the revenue and rent were rising continuously throughout the period and at the same time agricultural prosperity due to expansion of cultivation, commercialization of agriculture and irrigation facilities were also improved. But the fruit of this agricultural prosperity were gathered by the few classes of agricultural community.

With the spread of railway and by other means of transport and communication, the isolation of Indian remote areas has already been pierced and rural interior was connected with the Coastal lines, ports and also the town markets of the nearby areas.<sup>1</sup> This development in transport and communication in turn encouraged the pace of commercialization of agriculture. Owing to the heavy demand of revenue and rent, incentives for further improvement became dim to the poor cultivators.<sup>2</sup> Further more the shift from food crops to cash crops needed ready cash which could be obtained through credit facilities.<sup>3</sup> But during nineteenth century banking facilities were limited and poor cultivators had no alternative except to turn to moneylenders who charged

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1       Dhanagare, D.N., Op.cit., p. 37.

2       Ibid.

3       Ibid.

exorbitant interest rate and thus accumulated the economic surplus<sup>1</sup> generated in the countryside. In this situation cultivators when unable to repay the debt had to surrender<sup>2</sup> their lands to creditors.

For loan recovery land often had to be auctioned<sup>3</sup> and it was purchased by rich owners. Ironically the government machinery helped in the process of auction and<sup>4</sup> purchase.

In the eastern districts of North-western Provinces the landlords and the rich peasants forms the main source<sup>5</sup> of agricultural credit. In the western doab region especially in the Meerut district the professional money-lenders<sup>6</sup> and the traders had monopoly in credit. In the eastern districts rural credit and usury was an important source of income for the landlords and it also strengthened<sup>7</sup> their grip on the rural economy as well as on the society.

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1 Dhanagare, D.N., Op.cit., p. 37.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Eric-Stokes, The Peasant and the Raj, p. 240.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

Rise of demand for revenue and rent compelled the peasants to depend on the money-lenders and landlords.<sup>1</sup> To pay revenue and rent needy cash was provided by the money-lenders. Therefore, then three, the landlords, money-lenders and the government directly or indirectly supported each other.<sup>2</sup>

Another factor which strengthened the positions of moneylenders and landlords in rural India, was the negligible growth in the agricultural labourers. Price of food grains and other necessities rose causing the cost of living to grow but the wages as the data indicates failed to make corresponding rise.<sup>3</sup> The growth of population during nineteenth century played no less important role in the growth of indebtedness of the cultivating class. The demand for cultivable land increased and so the letting value of land had increased. The consequence of this increase was the enhancement of rent, because no tenant could afford to give up land.<sup>3</sup> And for the payment of this heavy rent the cultivators accepted the loan at the exorbitant rate of interest, which they could not repay.<sup>4</sup>

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1 D.N. Dhanagare, pp. 37-38.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 38.

The immediate victims of moneylenders' tyranny were the small landholders, tenants and under-tenants and share croppers, whose lands were passing<sup>1</sup> <sup>over</sup> to the moneylenders and rich landowners.

Between 1860 to 1900 many Rent Acts and sub-settlements were made and implemented, but the growing economic dominance of talugdars remained unhampered. In Oudh most of the tenants were non-occupancy and having no adequate protection against the ever growing oppression<sup>2</sup> of landlords.

It is difficult to determine the extent or depth of the indebtedness of the peasantry accurately. But it may be mentioned in passing that in Oudh over half of the<sup>3</sup> peasantry was indebted. The high rents taken by the landlords were very much responsible for the perpetual indebtedness<sup>4</sup> of the peasantry.

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1 D.N. Dhanagare, p. 39.

2 W.C. Neal, Economic Changes in Rural India - Land Tenure and Reform in Uttar Pradesh, 1800-1955; pp. 51-102; see also D.N. Dhanagare, pp. 111-125.

3 Majid Hayat, Agrarian Unrest in Northern India, p. 68.

4 Ibid.

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In Agra district it was found that<sup>1</sup> last Settlement 78% of the tenantry was in the grip of moneylenders. In the Fatehabad sub-division the average rose to 89%. In<sup>2</sup> Kanpur district the average was around 64%. While the permanently indebted peasantry in the district ranged<sup>3</sup> between 12% to 20%.

The small zamindars and tenants both suffered due to inferior seasons and poor harvest whose ill effects had been aggravated to certain extent by ~~the~~ enhanced revenue<sup>4</sup> demand. Many small zamindars and pattidars were unable to save anything even in the most favourable season, therefore, were bound to be trapped in the moneylenders grip at the time of<sup>5</sup> natural calamity, which was not uncommon in India. During the last thirty years of nineteenth century, in Oudh the indebtedness was growing. In Hardoi district even some cases<sup>6</sup> of indebtedness among the big landholders are mentioned.

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1 W. Crooke, North-Western Provinces of India, p. 243.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Oudh Gazetteer, Vol.I, p. 426; during the time of revision of Settlement (1860-to 1872) land revenue of Oudh has been enhanced to about 33%.

5 Majid Hayat, p. 68.

6 Elizabeth Whitecombe, Agrarian Condition in Northern India, Vol.I, 1860-190 , p. 161.

In Aligarh district 50% of the land changed hands between 1839 and 1858 and the moneylenders and traders enlarged their share of the landholding of the district by means of purchases from 3.4% in 1839 to 12.3% in 1868. In the Muzaffarnagar, a quarter of land changed hands between 1841 and 1861 and the proportion of land held by new agricultural classes increased from 11% of the total area in 1840 to 19.5% in 1860.

The economic consequences of uneven fluctuations in prices, rents and revenue demands would be anything but uniform for different agrarian classes. The relatively stable land revenues and steadily rising rents left a considerable margin of profits for landowners, and price rise fetched good returns to the cultivating owners and the occupany tenants with sizeable landholdings. Because these two classes were able to part their land for cash crops and could enter the market. The small landowners and tenants-at will were severely affected with rising rents and increased prices, since they were forced to buy on the market, at least for their own consumption, which they have

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1 Eric Stokes in Elites in South Asia, E. Leach and S.N. Mukherjee (eds) Cambridge, 1970, p. 20.

2 E.F. Atkinson, Vol. III, p. 552.

3 Eric Stokes, The Peasants and the Raj, p. 240, the estimated rental assests of the U.P. doubled between 1899 and 1922 while the revenue demand rose by only 12%.

4 D.N. Dhanagare, pp. 115-116.

5 Ibid.

earlier sold at the lower rate for the purpose of rent<sup>1</sup> payment and for other necessities.

The economic distress was much more evident in districts of Oudh than in the North-Western Provinces, because<sup>2</sup> the proportion of unprotected tenants in Oudh was higher. Although it is difficult to document the decline in material conditions of the life of the peasantry; but the diet of the rural classes of Northern India indicates that the<sup>3</sup> ultimate in poverty had seemingly been reached.

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- 1       Majid Hayat, pp. 91-98.
  - 2       D.N. Dhanagare, pp. 115-116; see also T.R. Metcalf, Land, Landlords and the British Raj.
  - 3       Irfan Habib, Colonialization of Indian Economy, in Social Scientist No. 32.

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